the weekly
Standard

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ABROAD

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A world of ideas on public policy.

Public-Private Partnerships Are Key to Fighting Disease

By Joseph A. Cook, M.D.

Public-private partnerships involving governments, foundations, private companies, and non-governmental organizations have proven to be valuable allies in fighting the infectious diseases and epidemics that ravage the world's poorest and most vulnerable communities. Pharmaceutical companies have been prominent in these efforts, donating medicines and other resources to fight malaria, tuberculosis, and opportunistic infections associated with AIDS. Although debate continues about the appropriate organization and scope of the fight against infectious disease, consensus prevails on one key point: drugs alone are insufficient in the absence of strengthened healthcare systems and changes in health behaviors.

The International Trachoma Initiative (ITI) was among the first public-private partnerships to link prevention with treatment in developing countries, while building the infrastructure necessary for sustained improvement in public health. Founded by Pfizer Inc and the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, ITI works toward the elimination of trachoma, the world's leading cause of preventable blindness. In addition to its programming for applied research and communications, ITI supports national efforts to eliminate trachoma through implementation of the "SAFE" strategy (Surgery, Antibiotics, Facial hygiene, Environmental change) recommended by the World Health Organization.

Trachoma has left some six million people throughout the world either blind or visually impaired, and 150 million people infected and in need of treatment. Another 540 million people – almost 10 percent of the world's population – are at risk of contracting the disease. Like many infectious diseases, trachoma disproportionately affects the poor, and it blinds women two to three times more often than men. The burden of trachoma falls most heavily on countries whose people lack basic access to water, healthcare, and education.

Based on fifteen years of research supported by the Clark Foundation, the SAFE strategy addresses the medical, behavioral, and environmental requisites for eliminating trachoma. Because SAFE is a broad-ranging strategy that involves community development, health promotion, and curative medicine, it requires partnership across sectors. Yet because of its technical simplicity, trachoma control can be integrated with other community-based health and development efforts.

Public-private partnerships have proven to be valuable allies in fighting the infectious diseases that ravage the world's poorest communities

Established in 1998, ITI collaborates with a network of partners to implement the SAFE strategy at the community level in a number of countries where trachoma is endemic. These programs have already shown promising results. In Morocco and Tanzania, for instance, severe trachoma infection has fallen by half in children. Overall, more than 10,000 individuals have received sight-preserving surgery; 2.5 million have received treatment with the powerful antibiotic Zithromax® *(azithromycin)*; and an estimated 20 million have received health education in personal and community hygiene.

The identification of Zithromax as an effective agent in fighting trachoma, along with Pfizer's donation of it for use against trachoma in developing countries, represented major advances in the SAFE strategy. A single oral dose of Zithromax can replace six weeks of tetracycline ointment, applied twice daily. Pfizer's involvement in ITI represents one of the first philanthropic pharmaceutical efforts to include a preventive component, including support of a public health strategy that can ultimately eliminate a disease.

ITI's early success reflects the importance of partnership among private companies, international agencies, and governmental and non-governmental organizations in deploying SAFE and making measurable progress toward eliminating trachoma. From the beginning, ITI saw the need for competency-based partnerships to address the complex nature of trachoma and the multi-disciplinary action needed to control it.

ITI's experience offers a number of lessons that can strengthen the fight against HIV/AIDS and other threats to economic development and social stability. First, disease-control programs must rest on solid scientific research. Second, programs should be locally organized and respond to local circumstances. Third, treatment should be closely linked with prevention and the development of a strong public health infrastructure. Finally, as demonstrated by the SAFE strategy, the program must fit within the broader context of health and social-sector reform.

One hundred years ago, Robert Koch, the father of modern microbiology, urged the governments and philanthropists of his day to fund sanatoria to treat tuberculosis patients. But he added that these facilities alone could not address the "root of the evil" of TB – the overcrowded living conditions of the poor. As the prestigious medical journal *The Lancet* has commented, Koch's warning remains relevant today. Innovative medical treatments alone cannot conquer disease. We must also address factors related to behavior, the environment, and healthcare infrastructure.

Joseph A. Cook, M.D., is the Executive Director of the International Trachoma Initiative, a tax-exempt, charitable organization founded by the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation and Pfizer Inc to seek the global elimination of blinding trachoma. Additional information about ITI can be found at http://www.trachoma.org.

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the weekly Standard

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The Surprisingly Good Guys List

The novelist Dan Jenkins once joked, "They should publish a list every year of who's not dead yet." In a similar spirit, THE SCRAPBOOK has decided to start a list of people we assumed were chattering asses but have turned out not to be. Call it the surprisingly good guys list.

For the first time in years, THE SCRAPBOOK found itself last week nodding in agreement with a column by *Newsweek*'s Jonathan Alter, this one attacking "mindless moral equivalency." "Sad to say," wrote Alter, "the line between explaining terrorism and rationalizing it has been repeatedly breached by a shallow left stuck in a deep anti-American rut." Hear, hear.

Warren Beatty earns probationary membership on the list (we're not total saps) for recalling in a speech in New York how his father used to like the phrase "Now is the time for all good people to come to the aid of their country," and then voicing his own support for George W. Bush: "The opposition party can support our commander in chief without putting its beliefs of reason, civil liberties [and] social programs aside."

Most impressive, though, was the e-mail manifesto "Why I Won't Sign" by lefty Michael H. Shuman, now program director for the Village Foundation, and the former executive director (1992-98) of the Institute for Policy Studies. Here are some excerpts:

"Like many progressives," writes Shuman, "I've been besieged with various anti-war petitions over the past week. I have two words of advice to my friends and colleagues on the left: Don't sign. The central arguments, however well intentioned, are astonishingly misguided:

"•We might start a war—Excuse me? We are already in a war started by others. More than 6,000 Americans were killed in a surprise attack—twice the casualties at Pearl Harbor. If this isn't an act of war, what is? . . .

"•We're just reaping what we've sown—Yes, America has angered many people worldwide—I'm one of them. Many of us have worked hard to change the nation's foreign policy, and I hope many more continue to do so. But our grievances do not permit us to firebomb the Pentagon, blow up the World Trade Center, or murder innocent civilians. We are a nation of law, and we should be trying to create a world of law. . . .

"•America's use of force cannot be trusted—Sorry, we're not always the bad guy. . . .

"There is a serious debate in which progressives must now engage, and it's not in whether force should be used. It's what kind of force. . . .

"We should be deeply skeptical not only of those who argue 'my country, right or wrong,' but also those who believe 'my country is always wrong.'"

Feel free to e-mail your candidates for future editions of the list, along with the work that you think qualifies them, to *Scrapbook@weeklystandard.com*. ♦

A Different Kind of Blowback

According to an Oct. 8 dispatch from the Associated Press, a pro-Taliban demonstrator in Peshawar, Pakistan, (see below) was engulfed in fire while burning a U.S. flag.

The demonstrator was taken to a hospital, and his condition is unknown. ♦

AP / Wide World Photos

Why Do They Hate Us?

We're referring in the headline not to this country but to journalists, who are always mystified when their fellow citizens fail to adulate them. Part of the problem is the high proportion of callow airheads in our ranks. Consider, for instance, this exchange last week between NBC's Matt Lauer and Air Force general D.L. Johnson, who was supervising the airdrops of food aid to Afghanistan.

LAUER: But you can't deny the fact that when you drop these into impoverished areas, you're, in effect, sending U.S.

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propaganda into those areas; you're saying, "Taliban bad. Here's a gift from the U.S."

JOHNSON: We're saying this is a gift of food and nourishment to people who are starving.

The deeper problem, however, may be that, as a class, we journalists are basically the south end of a horse going north.

Consider the "Practical Suggestions for Journalists Covering Catastrophe" offered recently by our most prestigious finishing school, the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism (the full document can be obtained at *www.cjr.org/year/01/5/coveringcatast.asp*).

It manages simultaneously to combine unctuousness, cynicism, and pomposity:

"A journalist, like a doctor, should uphold the principle: 'First, do no harm.' . . .

"If other journalists crowd in and you lose control of the interview, think about ways to alleviate any distress the interviewee is experiencing as a result. . . .

"If the interviewee cries, this is not necessarily a bad or harmful thing. . . . Carry paper tissues at all times, and offer them as a caring gesture. One reason people feel self-conscious about crying is nasal discharge, and offering them a paper tissue can help. A friendly touch on the arm is also often good.

"You may want to help them with a sense of purpose for the moment. It might help to say, 'I know this is really traumatic for you to talk about, but people need to know about it because . . .' Do have a good reason at hand as to why people need to know.

"Avoid stupid questions. First among these is 'How does it feel?' . . . Don't say, 'You must have felt . . .' You should be helping the person to articulate her own narrative, whatever it is, and by reflective listening, to legitimate it. . . .

"Sometimes people will feel violated or show anger, even if you haven't done anything wrong."

And sometimes, of course, they'll show anger because you're a jerk. ♦

Chattering Asses (cont.)

The Oct. 11 *Harvard Crimson* reports on a lecture by Cornel West at the Kennedy School. The speech "was originally supposed to focus on hip hop culture." But West changed focus after September 11.

"'America has been "niggerized" by the terrorist attacks,' West said, comparing current national anxieties to African Americans' long history of coping with terror and death. . . .

"West drew some of his strongest crowd reaction when he expressed a slight indignation over politicians' sudden infatuation with spending in the wake of the attacks. 'Sounds an awful lot like reparations to me,' West said to shouts of 'Amen!' from the crowd. 'I didn't think America was into reparations.'" ♦

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Casual

Radio Days

At a church dinner recently I stepped out during a lull to use the facilities. That wasn't all I did, nor, I'll confess, was it my only purpose. I proceeded outside, into the parking lot and then to my car. I got in and turned on the radio, preset to WSB-Atlanta, which is found at 750 AM, in case you didn't know, and which you can usually get in the Washington area once night descends.

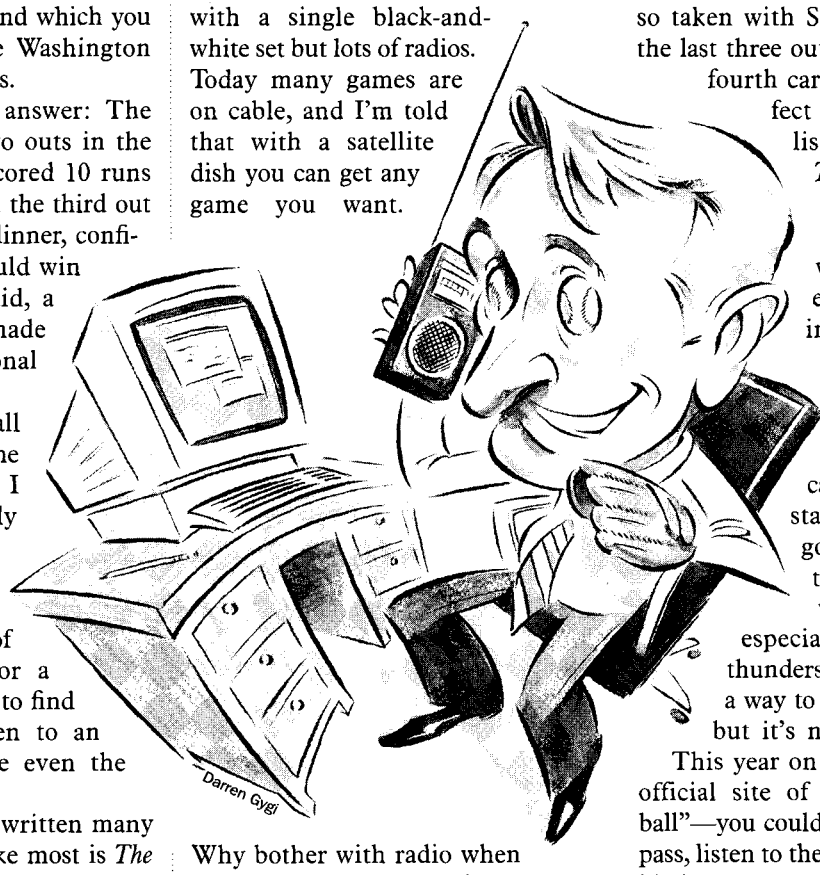
Quickly I had my answer: The Atlanta Braves had two outs in the first inning but had scored 10 runs against Florida. I heard the third out and went back to the dinner, confident that my team would win the game. Which it did, a victory that also made Atlanta the National League East champion.

Okay, I'm a baseball nut. My wife has told me that many times. But I suspect I'm not the only one who's gone to such absurd lengths in the thick of a pennant race—or even the thin of an April or a May or a June—to get to a radio to find out the score or listen to an inning or two. Maybe even the whole game.

Michael Novak has written many books, but the one I like most is *The Joy of Sports*, published 25 years ago. At Palo Alto in the late '60s, in his first teaching job, Novak found that his "indoor radio" couldn't bring in Los Angeles stations and thus the broadcasts of his beloved Dodgers. But at night his car radio could.

"In the close pennant races of those years, to my wife's dismay," he wrote, "I would retreat to the car in the driveway and listen to the radio. I felt silly. But I wanted to hear. More than once I took my dinner to the car to hear the end of a game." His *dinner*, mind you.

Novak is a senior baseball fan, and I'd guess that, among the more junior fans, few are as radiocentric as us older types. A big reason is television. Baseball fans under 35 grew up with cable television, while those of my maturity were in households with a single black-and-white set but lots of radios. Today many games are on cable, and I'm told that with a satellite dish you can get any game you want.



Why bother with radio when you can see the real thing?

A good argument, that, if you have the time to watch the whole game. I'll admit, too, that baseball on TV has other advantages, not least the video replays.

But there are good reasons for baseball on radio. Because radio doesn't demand your eyes, you can listen and do other things at the same time. Also, radio can be wonderfully portable. When big games arrive, I've been known to carry my Radio Shack transistor in a coat pocket. During the sixth game of the 1991 World Series we happened to be taking in a big concert out at George Mason University in Fairfax. Taking a few well-chosen breaks in the lobby, I heard parts of critical innings.

Radio also has better broadcasters than you'll find on TV. Growing up in Texas, I often tuned in Harry Caray and Jack Buck, who so splendidly joined to do the Cardinals' games on KMOX. (Buck, in his 80s, is still at the mike.) Living in California one year in the '70s, I got to hear the incomparable Vin Scully, who still does the Dodgers' games. Novak was so taken with Scully's rendering of the last three outs of Sandy Koufax's fourth career no-hitter (a perfect game) that he published it verbatim in *The Joy of Sports*. Novak commented that Scully's account was "as perfect a jewel as if it had been imagined, written, corrected, polished."

The problem with baseball on radio is that you can't tune in a faraway station until the sun goes down, and even then static may overwhelm the broadcast, especially on nights with thunderstorms. There is now a way to overcome all of that, but it's not very satisfactory.

This year on *www.mlb.com*—"the official site of major league baseball"—you could, with a $9.95 season pass, listen to the live broadcast of any big league game. But there was a 5- to 10-second delay in the broadcast, and often the transmission would be interrupted. Getting the audio back could consume a half inning or more.

The good news is that with satellite technology it may be possible to make a radio that receives game broadcasts live, day or night. Baseball Radio, I'd call it. It would be the perfect gift for the baseball nut.

Terry Eastland

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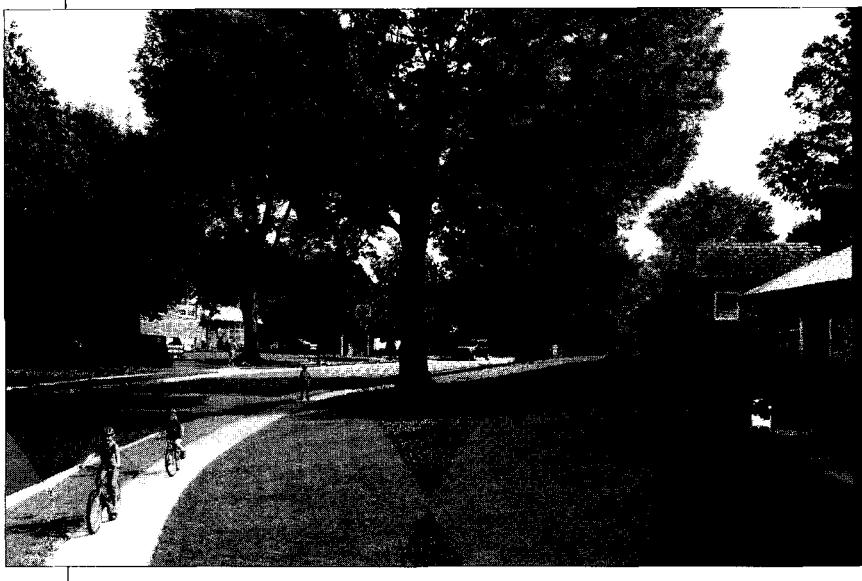

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Same Old Times in NYC

Noemie Emery's "The Grudge Report" (Oct. 1) is right on target. But her comments regarding Paul Krugman's *New York Times* column on Sept. 14 did not go far enough in exposing his biases.

The column decried partisanship in response to the terrorist bombings of Sept. 11. But like virtually all of Krugman's recent columns, it quickly became a partisan attack on Bush and Republicans.

Krugman found no trouble envisioning major increases in government spending, well beyond the initial $40 billion appropriation or even a bailout bill for airlines as a logical, nonpartisan approach to coping with the economy's woes. Soon thereafter, however, he argued that those who might prescribe tax cuts, particularly business or capital gains tax cuts, as a tonic for the economy were using the current crisis for partisan political purposes.

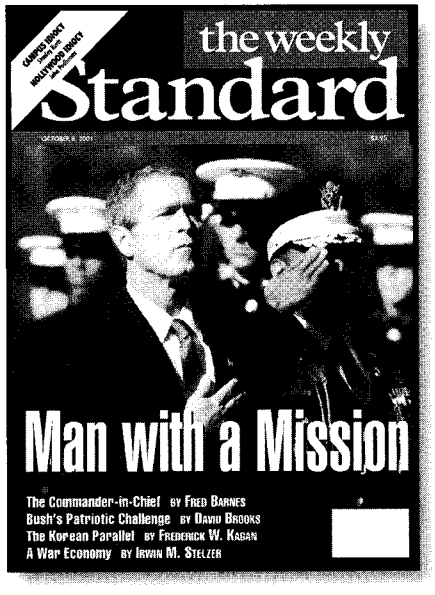
Interestingly, however, Krugman admitted "the driving force behind the economic slowdown has been a plunge in business investment." That being the case, wouldn't it seem logical to support some tax breaks for businesses and even a modest drop in the capital gains tax? For more than a few economists, it certainly would. But not for Krugman. For him, virtually all tax cuts are nothing more than partisan Republican politics, while all increases in government spending are simply sound economics. How absurd, but how predictable.

Richard R. West
Genoa, NV

So, Noemie Emery, what's your beef with the *New York Times*? Is it that the major newspaper for a city in which Bush lost the 2001 election by more than "about 25 percentage points" produces not-so-glowing reports about him? Is it that the "man-in-the-street" of that city doesn't have favorable words about him? Is it that the average New Yorker complains, as he did not about the previous president, that the president doesn't get out to see him quickly enough? Or is it just the misleading headlines in the *New York Times*? The newspaper, despite the wrongly worded headlines, prints words from what a majority of its readers agree are world-class reporters and op-ed writers, including William Safire and, recently, Defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

Maureen Dowd and Paul Krugman offer insightful, well-researched opinions that have critiqued both Democrats and Republicans. There are enough one-sided "news" stories and commentators in print and on the airwaves. Allow us to hear and read more fair journalism instead of more biased yelling and knee-jerk screaming.

I don't think a publication like The Weekly Standard that sits on one side of the political spectrum has a leg to stand on criticizing the most circulated newspaper in the United States about biased coverage when it doesn't employ the same standards itself.



Michael Conti
London, England

Mourning Kofi

The Scrapbook item "Wake Up and Smell the Kofi" (Oct. 1) was an unfair and unfounded attack on the United Nations and its secretary general, Kofi Annan.

The item neglects to mention that within a day of the heinous terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council passed strong resolutions condemning the attacks and providing the international legal framework for U.S. military action against those responsible. The resolutions, echoing President Bush's words, pledge the U.N. will take "all necessary steps" to bring to justice not only those responsible for the attacks, but also those who support and harbor them.

Moreover, The Scrapbook seems to willfully misconstrue what the secretary general has said about the attacks. In noting that he did not yet know the motivation of the perpetrators, he was not suggesting that he might approve of it once he found out. He was saying that motivation was irrelevant because no motivation or cause could justify mass murder of innocent civilians.

The U.N. secretary general has worked tirelessly to strengthen U.S.-U.N. relations. The U.S.-U.N. relationship is more important than ever, as the United States works with the United Nations to secure a global coalition against terrorism. I hope The Weekly Standard will keep that in mind, and look at the more complete picture of what the U.N. and its secretary general have done to address this issue.

Phyllis Cuttino
Executive Director
Better World Campaign
Washington, DC

Our Wary Allies

As an American Muslim with experience in the Middle East, I never cease to be amazed at what hackneyed clichés and barely veiled bigotry masquerade as informed commentary on the Middle East.

Reuel Marc Gerecht's piece "The Coalition Delusion" (Oct. 1) not only completely misunderstands what makes the terrorists tick, but wallows in stereotyping that would make any 19th-century race theorist proud. Military force is "the key to political survival from Casablanca to Kabul," our hard-nosed commentator writes, as if Muslims were mindless brutes incapable of understanding anything other than violence.

While it is true that overt support for the U.S. campaign could undermine many moderate regimes' popular legiti-

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macy in some quarters, it does not follow that Secretary Powell's attempts to gain regional support for American efforts are in vain. To the contrary, our penchant for unilateralism, selective adherence to international law, and unflagging support for Israeli brutality mean that we need to publicly demonstrate that our beef is with bin Laden rather than Muslims in general. Otherwise, we might as well officially declare the Seventh Crusade, because that's how it will look to onlookers in the Middle East.

Now, I suspect that Gerecht will lose little sleep over the brutish sensibilities of Muslims, but anyone interested in regional peace and stability should care. Contrary to the author's cartoon-like sketch, the Muslim masses aren't irrational America haters, but rather daily witnesses to Washington's double standards and its inhuman indifference to Arab/Muslim suffering.

Secretary Powell is trying to address America's credibility problem in the Middle East vis-à-vis human rights and terrorism. We ignore Muslim perceptions at great peril to regional stability, and thus betray the principles upon which this great nation was founded.

SVEND WHITE
Washington, DC

DENUNCIATION OVERDUE

I APPRECIATE THE OUTRAGE toward Bill Maher expressed in John Podhoretz's "Politically Unforgivable" (Oct. 8).

When Christopher Reeve suffered his riding accident, Maher said publicly that Reeve deserved what happened because of the animal abuse he was inflicting on the horse. He's never retracted that statement or apologized for it, and he has uttered equally idiotic statements on numerous occasions.

I quit listening to Maher when he belittled Reeve's mishap. What took THE WEEKLY STANDARD so long?

PETER CARTER
Chula Vista, CA

I BELIEVE JOHN PODHORETZ has unforgivably misunderstood Bill Maher, his politics, and his show. I have seen *Politically Incorrect* many times and can say that among all so-called entertainment personalities I can think of, Maher has more in common with the political views of THE WEEKLY STANDARD than most (excepting perhaps Maher's views on the drug war).

I believe Maher made it quite clear that he was not referring to the soldiers firing missiles from afar as the cowards, but rather our government in its deciding to seek coalition with terrorism-sponsoring states, rather than accepting that success in the war on terrorism will almost certainly require ground troops, U.S. casualties, and determination to truly hold countries sponsoring terrorism accountable.

My defense that Maher was misunderstood arises from the consistency of his views, which on foreign policy most people would call conservative. His ardent and repeated defense of Israel's right to defend itself—necessary given the frequent anti-globalization and anti-Zionist leanings of some of his guests—has gone so far as to vigorously and accurately dispute one guest's claim that the Jews stole Palestine and lack a historical presence in the area. Unlike every network news organization and most of the print media, Maher has not fallen into the trap of moral equivalence that has equated the actions of those defending themselves from terror and attack with the attacks and the terrorists. Until I see Ted Koppel protest Hannan Ashrawi's false, inflammatory, and frequently anti-Semitic, libelous statements, the need to keep Bill Maher on the air will persist.

DARRYL JACOBSON
New York, NY

DON'T LET WAR TAX US

AT VARIOUS POINTS in Irwin M. Stelzer's "The War Economy" (Oct. 8) are indications that he has forgotten everything we learned from Reaganomics and supply-side economics. It's as though he forgets that a stimulated economy makes more income, which can mean more income tax revenue.

For example, cutting capital gains taxes stimulates the economy and increases federal revenue. This fact has been demonstrated every time the tax has been cut. But even if capital gains are taxed at the same rate as regular income (and capital losses deducted in the same way as other losses), this is still double taxation.

Corporate taxation is another form of double taxation. A reduction in corporate taxes would stimulate the economy and produce more income to be taxed, and would be far superior to the corporate welfare of bailout packages. Tax cuts are always better than welfare for everyone concerned. Or does Stelzer equate allowing organizations to keep the money they've earned with giving them a handout?

Stelzer advocates cutting the regressive payroll tax. A better stimulus to the economy would be a flattening of the progresive income tax. Those who opposed the recent income tax cut did so because it helped the people who paid the most taxes more than those who paid the least.

Further, I am shocked at Stelzer's fiscally liberal notion of reversing a tax cut. Just as governments receive their just power from the consent of the governed, governments receive their just revenue from the money initially earned by the taxpayers. The reason we have a surplus in the first place is that the economic growth begun by Ronald Reagan's capital gains tax cuts and marginal tax rate cuts sustained itself in spite of Bush I and Clinton tax increases. Cutting capital gains taxes and marginal tax rates stimulates the economy, producing more income to be taxed and thus more tax revenue. And we will need all the federal revenue we can get to fight the war.

NORMAN HINES
Ridgecrest, CA

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In the Public Interest

Under Cover of Crisis

The Mercenaries Go Back to Work

The mercenary agents of special interest returned to work in Washington even before the smoke of 9/11 had cleared, before the tears had dried.

As most Americans asked what they could do for their country, the special interests asked what the country could do for them.

The airlines forgot their historic distaste for government and begged taxpayers for help. Congress responded with a bailout worth billions. Help for laid-off airline workers was an afterthought.

Before 9/11, the Dinosaur Lobby's energy plan – call it *"The Fossil Fuel Pollution and Profit Protection Act"* – was headed for a Senate filibuster. Immediately after 9/11, first Senator Murkowski and then Senator Inhofe tried to revive it, saying it would reduce our reliance on foreign oil. Gagged as they are by the Dinosaur Lobby's campaign cash, Murkowski and Inhofe cannot say that a major investment in renewable power and efficiency is a better path to energy independence and new jobs at home.

In the name of 9/11, Star Warriors at the Center for Security Policy – funded by defense contractors – urged President Bush to throw even more money at missile defense. Never mind the program's string of failed and fixed tests – its only success so far has been lining contractors' pockets. Never mind that future threats, like those of 9/11, will likely fly under any missile defense radar.

Not to be outdone, the National Taxpayers Union, defender of the oppressed wealthy, suggested that more tax breaks for corporations and the richest Americans would aid the war on terrorism.

Opportunism knows no bounds. Anything is possible under cover of crisis.

TomPaine.com – Under Cover of Crisis
Featuring Mokhiber and Weissman on "Wartime Opportunism"... "Dinosaur Dances" by Connie Harvey... "Airline Bailout: Hark Back to Chrysler" by John Donahue... and "The FCC Defies Terrorists: Media Monopolization Will Go On" by Danny Schechter, ***MediaChannel.org****.*

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the weekly Standard

Foolishness on the Hill

By the second week of August, instructors at the Pan Am Flying Academy in Eagan, Minnesota, had become so suspicious about the behavior of a new, foreign student that they were moved to contact the FBI's field office in Minneapolis. One Zacarias Moussaoui, a French citizen of Moroccan extraction in his early thirties, had paid $8,300 in cash for lessons in the operation of a Boeing 747 jetliner. He wanted to know how to open a locked cockpit door from the outside. He wanted to know what in-flight information the plane's onboard computers relayed to air traffic controllers on the ground. He wanted to know what emergency security procedures its pilots and crew were directed to follow. And he wanted to know how to steer a jumbo jet, but not how to take off or land. Zacarias Moussaoui was making the Pan Am Flying Academy mighty nervous, and the school thought the FBI might want to know about him.

And the FBI did want to know about him. The Bureau had been aware "for years" and "from multiple sources," it has since been reported, that suspected terrorists with ties to Osama bin Laden were receiving training on jetliner simulators at commercial facilities all across the United States. This Eagan, Minnesota, character seemed like he might be one of them. So agents in Minneapolis asked their Bureau and Justice Department superiors in Washington to secure a warrant to tap Moussaoui's phone and search his computer hard drive. But they were rebuffed—even after the French intelligence agency sent Washington a classified cable on August 27 indicating that Moussaoui had extensive ties to Islamic terrorist organizations and had been spotted, as recently as two months before, in or around Afghanistan.

Under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978, you see, a panel of district court judges will approve a secret physical or electronic search only when federal law enforcement authorities can show "probable cause" to believe that a suspect is functioning *directly* for an overseas government or terrorist organization—and only when the "primary purpose" of the proposed search is the gathering of foreign intelligence information, not the accumulation of evidence for a criminal prosecution. Where Zacarias Moussaoui was concerned, the Justice Department reasoned, correctly it would seem, that the FBI could satisfy neither requirement.

The department did manage to get the man off the streets. He was arrested on August 17 for having an expired travel visa, which apparently prevented him from boarding and helping hijack the United Airlines jet that crashed in rural Pennsylvania on September 11. But it was only after that crash that the FBI got a peek at Moussaoui's apartment, where they would earlier have found 747 flight manuals. And at his computer, where they would earlier have found a great quantity of alarming information about Osama bin Laden. And at his telephone records, where they would earlier have found leads to the identity of at least one World Trade Center conspirator, pilot Mohammed Atta.

It's conceivable that the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act kept the FBI from preventing the greatest one-day loss of U.S. civilians in history.

It's conceivable that the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 kept the FBI from preventing the greatest one-day loss of civilian lives in American history.

And House Republicans have been all over this issue like flies on glue. Trouble is, they have devoted the bulk of their energy *against* a modest Bush administration proposal to fix some of the Surveillance Act's manifest flaws. "The question all Americans need to be asking," says Rep. Bob Barr of Georgia, who has led his party's fight in the House Judiciary Committee, "is 'when is enough enough?'" Should the FBI secure approval for secret, prophylactic searches concerning future Zacarias Moussaouis, Barr warns, it will represent a "vast expansion of government power" to begin "dismantling constitutionally protected safeguards and diminishing fundamental rights to priva-

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cy." No doubt many things must change in the wake of the September 11 mass murders in New York and Washington. But whatever else we do, Bob Barr insists, we "must not . . . expand law enforcement's investigative authority."

Rep. Barr is in fever-swamp territory here. And a great chunk of the House GOP, joined by many of the "conservative" interest groups that are generally friendly to Republicans on Capitol Hill, have followed him into the bog. The executive branch of the federal government already enjoys an inherent, plenary power under Article II of the Constitution to conduct warrantless searches for foreign intelligence purposes. No U.S. court, anywhere, has ever held otherwise. All that the Bush administration's anti-terrorism proposal would do—for example, by expanding the legal definition of terrorist activities so that it clearly includes what Zacarias Moussaoui was up to in Eagan, Minnesota—is eliminate a statutory basis for suppression of search-derived evidence in terror-related criminal trials.

If it sounds technical and obscure, that's because it is. But it promises what most normal people would consider a welcome result: The FBI will be less gun-shy in the future about initiating surveillance of alien terrorists in our midst. This is what Rep. Barr calls a "vast expansion of government power" and, though the proposed reform does not apply to U.S. citizens or permanent residents, somehow a threat to civil liberties.

The House GOP's response to the attacks is hysterical recoil from the vigorous exercise of federal power.

Similarly, and unrebutted by their allies in the congressional Republican leadership, representatives of putatively mainstream conservative "public interest" organizations worry aloud that if the legal definition of terrorist activities is at all expanded then the Justice Department will willy-nilly begin prosecuting American citizens, under anti-terrorism statutes that carry life sentences upon conviction, for "unauthorized use of automatic teller machines" at local banks. These so-called conservatives denounce as "guilt by association" an executive branch proposal to authorize deportation proceedings against visiting aliens who are . . . well, guilty of active association with known international terrorist groups. In response to an administration request that the attorney general be given increased latitude to detain in custody otherwise deportable aliens who pose safety or security risks to American citizens, the same conservatives evoke, with a great show of horror, the infamous World War II-era internment of Japanese Americans.

That those Japanese Americans were actual citizens against whom no evidence of treason or other criminality existed—and that the detention of deportable aliens for national security reasons is unquestionably constitutional—goes unmentioned. Nor is it explained how a proposal to authorize, in terrorism investigations, the collection of personal information on file at educational institutions like the Pan Am Flying Academy would, in the words of one leading conservative speaking "in defense of freedom," thus "infringe on the privacy rights of all students throughout the nation."

Such self-styled defenders of freedom on the right are pleased as punch now to be making common cause with the left against what one of them calls "domestic enemies of the Constitution"—a group of saboteurs whose activities are apparently directed by the president of the United States. But this much celebrated "left-right" coalition is not what it appears to be at first glance. Truth be told, its most prominent member on the "left," the ACLU, has raised relatively few objections to recent Justice Department anti-terror proposals—and has done so in much less strident language than lately issues from the House of Conservatism. Moreover, and much more significantly, it is not the left-leaning political party that has aggressively attempted to dilute and restrain the executive branch's response to the events of September 11. Last Thursday in the Democratic-controlled Senate, majority leader Tom Daschle muscled through, by a 96-1 vote, a piece of omnibus anti-terrorism legislation that grants the Justice Department most of the significant investigative tools it has requested.

The Republican-controlled House, by contrast, until it ran out of time last Friday and adopted most of the Senate bill instead, had planned to approve a very different piece of legislation, one denuded of several valuable weapons against terrorism that Bob Barr and his allies bizarrely contend are threats to the Bill of Rights. House Republicans are reported still to be hopeful that they can circumscribe the legislation's new federal police powers when a final version is negotiated in conference with the Senate. House Republicans are reported, too, to be on the "verge of mutiny" against George W. Bush's White House for the low priority it has placed on tax cuts since September 11.

Amazing. Five thousand-plus people are slaughtered by a foreign terrorist attack on the United States, and the House Republican party's first instinct is hysterical recoil from the vigorous exercise of federal authority. Such a political party is fundamentally unserious, dangerously unmoored from reality. And a fundamentally unserious party is a party that cannot be trusted to hold power in the nation's legislature, especially at a time, like this, of genuine emergency.

It is an established pattern of history that a sitting president's political party loses seats in Congress during midterm elections. If that pattern holds, and the House of Representatives goes Democratic next November, House Republicans may have only themselves to blame.

—David Tell, for the Editors

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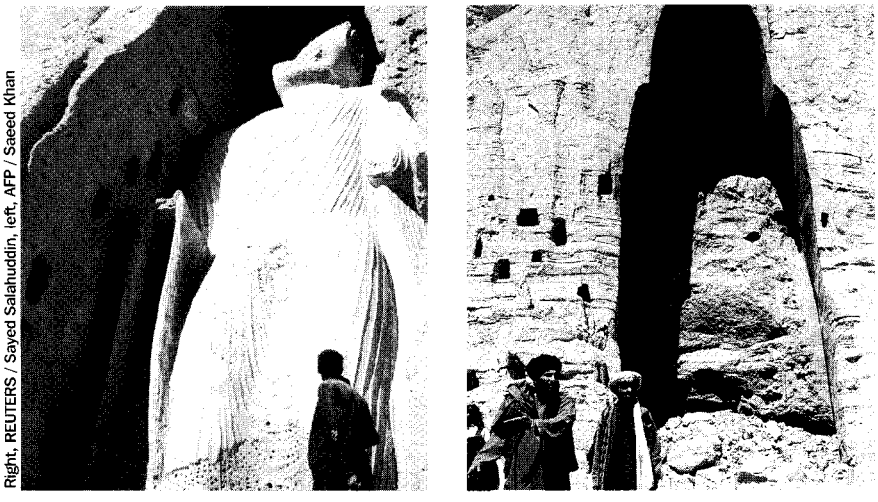
The Enemy Is Not Islam. It Is Nihilism.

Why *everything* is at stake.

BY CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER



Right, REUTERS / Sayed Salahuddin, left, AFP / Saeed Khan

The Bamiyan Buddha, before and after its destruction by the Taliban.

EUROPE'S GREAT RELIGIOUS WARS ended in 1648. Three and a half centuries is a long time, too long for us in the West to truly believe that people still slaughter others to vindicate the faith.

Thus in the face of radical Islamic terrorism that murders 6,000 innocents in a day, we find it almost impossible to accept at face value the reason offered by the murderers. Yet Osama bin Laden could not be clearer. Jihad has been declared against the infidel, whose power and influence thwart the triumph of Islam, and whose success and example—indeed, whose very existence—are an affront to the true faith. As a leader of Hamas declared at a rally three days after the World Trade Center attack, "the only solution is for Bush to convert to Islam."

To Americans, who are taught religious tolerance from the cradle, who visit each other's churches for interdenominational succor and solidarity, this seems simply bizarre. On September 25, bin Laden issues a warning to his people that Bush is coming "under the banner of the cross." Two weeks later, in his pre-taped post-attack video, he scorns Bush as "head of the infidels."

Can he be serious? This idea is so alien that our learned commentators, Western and secular, have gone rummaging through their ideological attics to find more familiar terms to explain why we were so savagely attacked: poverty and destitution in the Islamic world; grievances against the West, America, Israel; the "wretched of the earth"—Frantz Fanon's 1960s apotheosis of anti-colonialism—rising against their oppressors.

Reading conventional notions of class struggle and anti-colonialism into bin Laden, the Taliban, and radical Islam is not just solipsistic. It is nonsense. If poverty and destitution, colonialism and capitalism are animating radical Islam, explain this: In March, the Taliban went to the Afghan desert where stood great monuments of human culture, two massive Buddhas carved out of a cliff. At first, Taliban soldiers tried artillery. The 1,500-year-old masterpieces proved too hardy. The Taliban had to resort to dynamite. They blew the statues to bits, then slaughtered 100 cows in atonement—for having taken so long to finish the job.

Buddhism is hardly a representative of the West. It is hardly a cause of poverty and destitution. It is hardly a symbol of colonialism. No. The statues represented two things: an alternative faith and a great work of civilization. To the Taliban, the presence of both was intolerable.

The distinguished Indian writer and now Nobel Prize winner V.S. Naipaul, who has chronicled the Islamic world in two books (*Among the Believers* and *Beyond Belief*), recently warned (in a public talk in Melbourne before the World Trade Center attack), "We are within reach of great nihilistic forces that have undone civilization." In places like Afghanistan, "religion has been turned by some into a kind of nihilism, where people wish to destroy themselves and destroy their past and their culture . . . to be pure. They are enraged about the world and they wish to pull it down." This kind of fury and fanaticism is unappeasable. It knows no social, economic, or political solution. "You cannot converge with this [position] because it holds that your life is worthless and your beliefs are criminal and should be extirpated."

This insight offers a needed window on the new enemy. It turns out that the enemy does have recognizable analogues in the Western experience. He is, as President Bush averred in his address to the nation, heir to the malignant ideologies of the 20th century. In its nihilism, its will to power, its celebration of blood and death, its craving for the cleansing purity that comes only from eradicating life and culture, radical Islam is

Charles Krauthammer is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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heir, above all, to Nazism. The destruction of the World Trade Center was meant not only to wreak terror. Like the smashing of the Bamiyan Buddhas, it was meant to obliterate greatness and beauty, elegance and grace. These artifacts represented civilization embodied in stone or steel. They had to be destroyed.

This worship of death and destruction is a nihilism of a ferocity unlike any since the Nazis burned books, then art, then whole peoples. Goebbels would have marvelled at the recruitment tape for al Qaeda, a two-hour orgy of blood and death: image after image of brutalized Muslims shown in various poses of victimization, followed by glorious images of desecration of the infidel—mutilated American soldiers in Somalia, the destruction of the USS *Cole*, mangled bodies at the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Throughout, the soundtrack endlessly repeats the refrain "with blood, with blood, with blood." Bin Laden appears on the tape to counsel that "the love of this world is wrong. You should love the other world . . . die in the right cause and go to the other world." In his October 9 taped message, al Qaeda spokesman Sulaiman abu Ghaith gloried in the "thousands of young people who look forward to death, like the Americans look forward to living."

Once again, the world is faced with a transcendent conflict between those who love life and those who love death both for themselves and their enemies. Which is why we tremble. Upon witnessing the first atomic bomb explode at the Trinity site at Alamogordo, J. Robert Oppenheimer recited a verse from the Hindu scripture *Bhagavad Gita*: "Now I am become death, the destroyer of worlds." We tremble because for the first time in history, nihilism will soon be armed with the ultimate weapons of annihilation. For the first time in history, the nihilist will have the means to match his ends. Which is why the war declared upon us on September 11 is the most urgent not only of our lives, but in the life of civilization itself. ♦

Afghanistan—and Beyond

A long-term U.S. strategy for Central Asia.

BY FREDERICK W. KAGAN

IN CENTRAL ASIA and Afghanistan, the vital interests of four nuclear powers—Russia, China, Pakistan, and India—collide. That critical fact should suffice to dispel any thought that the United States has the option of vanquishing bin Laden, overthrowing the Taliban, and abandoning the region to its own devices. The dangers are obvious and unacceptable. The implications—for the military campaign that has begun in Afghanistan and for our long-term involvement in the region—need to be thought through.

The airstrikes launched last week against military targets in Afghanistan were the first step in a campaign whose complexity should not be underestimated. Ultimately, we will most likely have to deploy ground forces in significant numbers to take and hold ground, and we will probably have to keep them there over a lengthy period.

As the administration seems to recognize, we cannot hope to form a stable government in Afghanistan on the basis of the Northern Alliance alone. The forces in the alliance took power briefly in the early 1990s, but were unable to establish their legitimacy. Their failure led to a half-decade civil war, which the Taliban won. It is far from clear that, bereft of its most effective military commander (assassinated by bin Laden's agents on September 9), the Northern Alliance would do better today.

Regardless of who commands it, moreover, its ethnic make-up militates against a Northern Alliance government. The alliance represents a Tajik-Uzbek coalition that is far from stable; Tajik-Uzbek conflict kept civil war simmering across the border in Tajikistan throughout the 1990s, and continues to threaten stability there and in neighboring Uzbekistan. But even if the alliance holds together, Tajiks and Uzbeks are ethnic minorities in Pashtun-dominated Afghanistan. It is difficult to imagine any stable government in Kabul without the participation of a considerable Pashtun bloc.

The real challenge we face in Afghanistan, therefore, is to bring into being a Pashtun leadership group that can participate in a coalition government with the Northern Alliance. Somehow, we must persuade or compel the Northern Alliance to accept such a compromise, and this we can do only if we are not dependent on the Northern Alliance for ground power.

To put a stable government in power in Afghanistan, then, we will have to make a significant deployment (in the tens of thousands) of American ground forces to the country. Only such a deployment will give us the respect and leverage we will need to force compromise upon disparate and hostile ethnic groups. There is considerable reason to believe that we can succeed in this. The two decades of nearly continuous war Afghanistan has endured have clearly begun to generate the desire for a settlement, even a compromise settlement. This is vital if stability is to be restored. It is unlikely, however, that the Afghans will come to such a compromise if theirs are the only forces on the ground.

Frederick W. Kagan is a military historian and the co-author of While America Sleeps.

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AP / Wide World Photos

Northern Alliance fighters prepare guns in the Takhar province of Afghanistan.

There are indications that the administration has come to realize the importance of introducing ground forces soon. In any event, the president must begin to warn the American people of the likelihood of an extended and extensive deployment of American ground forces in Central Asia. At least as urgently, he must ask Congress for a substantial increase in the defense budget, for our armed forces will not be able to maintain the necessary deployment in Central Asia over the long term without seriously eroding our ability to meet challenges elsewhere in the world.

Military operations, however, require consideration of the delicate international situation in South Asia. All of our plans and actions must take into account that going after bin Laden and deposing the Taliban regime is not enough. For there will be no lack of people willing to pick up the banner of the anti-Western jihad, and an unstable Central Asia will continue to offer them a perfect base from which to operate. The proximity of four nuclear powers raises the stakes.

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan have been struggling for supremacy in Central Asia. The Uzbeks have the largest and best organized military in the region, the Kazakhs real and potential economic strength and strong ties to Russia. The Kazakh-Russian tie is a natural one, not only because they share a long border, but also because a very considerable portion of the Kazakh population is ethnically Russian and Ukrainian. The Uzbeks, for their part, have been eager to bring the United States into the region as a counterbalance to Russian influence and support for Kazakhstan. The deployment of American ground forces into Uzbekistan is likely to make it seem that we have chosen sides—which could polarize the area and alienate the other Central Asian states, as well as the Russians.

An even greater danger exists, however, along the Uzbek-Tajik border. The Uzbeks have for some time identified Tajik rebels as among their most serious security threats, and they have repeatedly launched military raids across the border into Tajikistan. The Tajiks have suffered through a lengthy civil war since the collapse of Soviet power, and maintain their precarious stability in part thanks to the continuing presence of Russian troops in their country. Should the Uzbeks undertake further military action against perceived rebel forces or threats in Tajikistan while American forces are present in Uzbekistan, the potential for a serious crisis not only in Central Asia, but in U.S.-Russian relations, will be very high.

If civil war rages in Afghanistan, the ethnic make-up of the region makes it possible that hostilities will spill over into Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. It is essential, therefore, that we commit in advance not only to establishing stability in Afghanistan, but also to helping maintain stability in Central Asia. Also essential will be the development of a solid working relationship with Moscow.

Russia still sees Central Asia as

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part of its sphere of influence, and will take very ill the prospect of being supplanted in that region by the United States. The delicate Russian economy, furthermore, relies heavily on Kazakh resources. Thus, Russian security demands both stability and a pro-Russian orientation in Central Asia. If our involvement in the region is confined to Uzbekistan in pursuit of the short-term goal of supporting military operations against the Taliban, we are likely to alienate the Russians and their Central Asian clients.

Instead, we can work with the Russians to develop a strategic alliance in Central Asia that leaves Moscow predominant but supports the actions we must take to achieve our own goals. It is in Russia's interest as much as our own to subdue the Taliban and restore stability in South Asia. If we are willing to accept complexity and make the compromises necessary to secure Russian support—and, above all, if we are willing to put boots on the ground to prove our seriousness—then there is every reason to hope for a successful outcome.

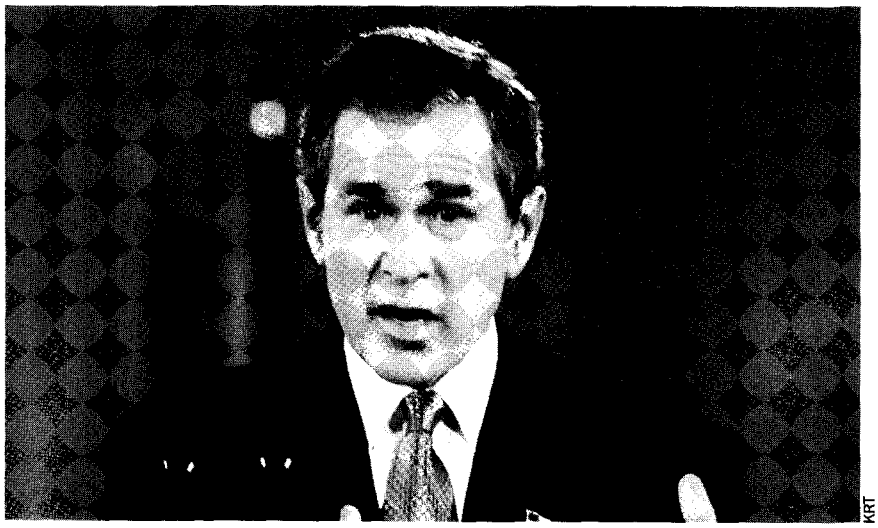
The crisis in South Asia, in other words, should force us to undertake a radical reevaluation of our overall strategic goals and aims. The fear of "nation-building" that prompted our humiliating withdrawal from Somalia must be abandoned; we should even embrace that idea in the name of establishing stability in a vital and volatile region. The temptation to rely on airpower and avoid the deployment of ground forces must be cast aside in a situation that clearly minimizes the value of our technological prowess and places a premium on our willingness to put our soldiers where our interests are.

Above all, the illusion that we are in a "strategic pause" that allows us to reduce both the size and the readiness of our armed forces should by now have been dispelled. We are at a turning point in history, and the future rests on our willingness, even if it is costly, to do what needs to be done. ♦

A Different Kind of War President

The compassionate commander in chief.

BY FRED BARNES



KRT

PRESIDENT BUSH never tires of saying the fight against terrorism is "a different kind of war." He said it four times, in one form or another, at his prime-time press conference last week. But it's not only the war that's different. Bush himself is a different kind of war president. Sure, he stresses familiar themes like the nation's resolve to achieve victory and the goverment's concern for the safety of the American people. These are normal talking points for a wartime leader. But Bush has added some new elements. Though America was the victim of a terrorist attack by Islamic radicals headquartered in Afghanistan, Bush insists the war is not against Islam or Afghanistan. And while America is not at fault, he defends the country's goodness as if it were at issue. He repeatedly says we're compassionate, sending food to the Afghans, and tolerant, going out of his way to reassure Arab Americans.

Prior presidents would no doubt be shocked. They stuck to the patriotic perennials, even when the United States was part of a wartime coalition (World War II, the Korean War, the Cold War). But in the battle against Osama bin Laden and his terrorist network, America has Arab and Muslim allies so lukewarm they probably should be viewed as allies in name only. Bush feels he must make them as comfortable as possible being on America's side. Of course they're as terrified of bin Laden and Islamic radicals as America is and far more vulnerable to being overthrown. Still, Bush goes out of his way to coddle them rhetorically. He's gotten pretty adept at it.

The Bush war mantra has five parts, two conventional and three peculiar to Bush and the war against terrorism. He mentions at least a couple of them at every photo op and in every brief speech. At his nationally televised press conference, he hit all

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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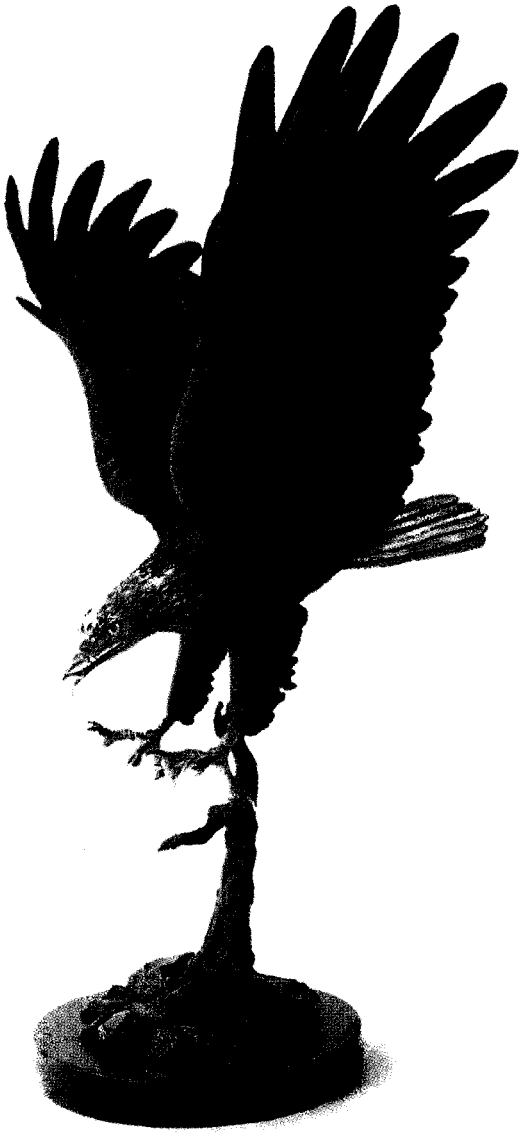

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five: resolve, reassurance, compassion, tolerance, and what a different sort of war this is. It was a remarkable performance with Bush in total control, showing once again that the war has brought out the best in him. Press conferences, like speeches, used to be treacherous for Bush. Now he's become an effective communicator, especially disciplined at using repetition to make his points.

Nearly every Bush talk has a half-dozen punchy sentences in which he vows to see the war to the very end. "I'm determined to stay the course," he said at the press conference. "We will not tire," he declared at FBI headquarters on October 10. "We will not relent." And the day before that, at a White House photo op with German chancellor Gerhard Schröder, he said, "If it takes one day, one month, one year, or one decade, we're patient enough." And to business leaders in New York a few days earlier, he said that not only is "this president resolved, but America is resolved to rout out terrorism."

Reasurrance? Bush tries to reassure the public for the same reason he expresses resolve: It's what's required of a war president to keep up the country's fighting spirit and support for the war. Bush used a hostile question from Terry Moran of ABC at the press conference to assert his administration is on top of things. Moran asked skeptically about an FBI alert that more terrorist attacks on America may be imminent. Bush's response was unresponsive—preposterous, really—but clever. He said an alert in itself was reassuring. "It's important for the American people to know their government is on full alert," he said, "and that's what that warning showed."

Bush's case for American compassion is, in part, a straw man argument, but it also explains a unique policy. "As we strike military targets, we'll also drop food, medicine, and supplies to the starving and suffering men and women and children of Afghanistan," the president said on October 7 while announcing the start of air raids. This shows "the compas-

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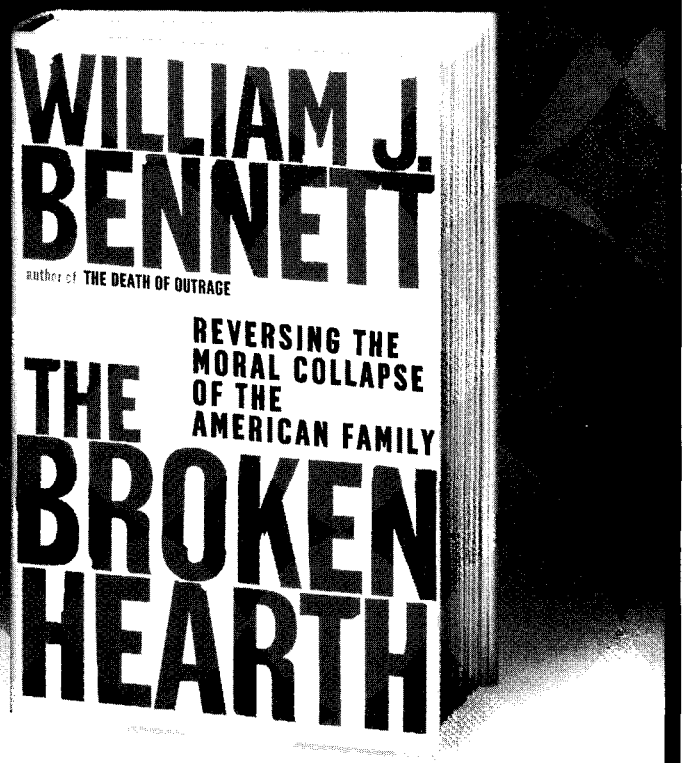
sion of the American people," he later told reporters. Lack of compassion, however, is not one of the terrorists' criticisms of America. The bomb-and-feed policy also demonstrates, according to Bush, that while America is at war with the Taliban regime, it's "a friend to the Afghan people." To understand how unusual this argument is, imagine President Roosevelt saying, during World War II, that we're against the government of Japan but not at war with the Japanese people. Hard to imagine, but then Roosevelt didn't have to worry about queasy Muslim allies.

As for tolerance, Bush rarely passes up a chance to do a riff on it. He made the point several different ways at his press conference that America is not fighting a war against Islam or Muslims. This is another straw man. Does anybody honestly think America is targeting either? No. And does anyone believe Arab Americans face true repression, as Japanese Americans once did? Of course not. But Bush loves to repeat stories about Christians and Jews rushing to the defense of their Arab-American neighbors. The stories show the "true nature of America," Bush said. In fact, Bush said tolerance in America of other faiths and races is what "will ultimately defeat terrorist activity." Perhaps, but military force is bound to hasten the day.

In a modern war against terrorists, a war with religious overtones and ethnic sensitivities, Bush's politically correct themes of compassion and tolerance may have a place. It is, as Bush says, a different sort of war. He says this over and over to reconcile the country to a war that may drag on without smashing victories (or defeats). But the country may already be reconciled, thanks in large measure to Bush's unblinking focus on the threat we face. "The danger is here now, not only from a military enemy, but from an enemy of all law, all liberty, all morality, all religion," he said at a Pentagon ceremony on the one-month anniversary of the terrorist attacks. Everyone who heard him looked absolutely convinced. ♦

If we are to repair the social fabric, the work must begin at home.



The American family is under siege as never before. Now, William J. Bennett mounts a compelling argument in its defense and cites the societal shifts that threaten the future of the nuclear family:

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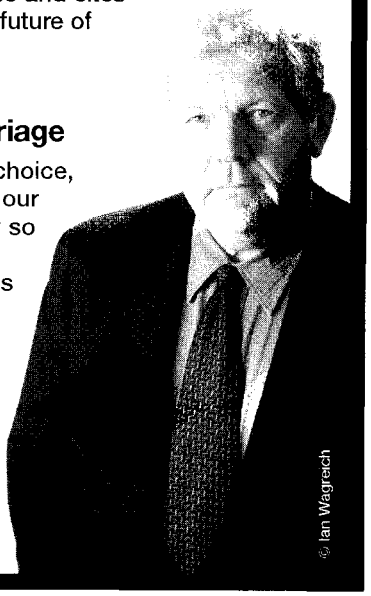
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Our Uzbek Friends

They're the enemy of our enemies.

BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

AP / Wide World Photos

Donald Rumsfeld meets Islam Karimov, president of Uzbekistan, Oct. 5, 2001.

WITH THE COMING of the war on terrorism, the United States acquired an ally about which most Americans know very little: the Central Asian nation of Uzbekistan. The mistakes our government—and supposedly friendly "non-governmental organizations"—have made in the past in relating to the Uzbeks are a foretaste of challenges ahead.

First, some facts. Of the 23 million citizens of Uzbekistan, 70 percent are Uzbeks, speaking a Turkic language. The few Americans who think about Uzbekistan have tended to write it off as an impoverished backwater of the former Soviet empire. But the Uzbeks possess distinctive resources, especially in the area of Islamic culture. There was a time, from the 8th to the 15th century, when their fabled cities of Bukhara and Samarkand led the Muslim world in the development of theology, mathematics, poetry, and spirituality. Descendants of the rulers of Samarkand established Muslim power in India.

Undeniably, after decades of tsarist and Soviet Russian imperialist rule, Uzbekistan has its share of problems. Uzbek president Islam Karimov has been widely condemned as a post-Communist authoritarian—there is evidence of abuses in his justice system, including allegations of torture and deaths in police custody—and the transition away from a statist economy has been slow. The country must contend with a particularly difficult aspect of the Soviet legacy: Moscow long treated it as a monocrop colony, producing mainly cotton. But Uzbekistan is also dealing with another, more urgent problem: terrorism.

On September 15, four days after the horrors in New York and Washington, State Department spokesman Richard Boucher announced that the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) would be designated a foreign terrorist organization under U.S. law. The IMU thus appears on Washington's list of 28 entities supporting Osama bin Laden and his network. Boucher called the IMU, which declared war on the Uzbek government in 1999, "responsible for criminal acts of terrorism" and noted its involvement in the kidnapping of foreigners, bombings, bus hijackings, and the murder of ordinary citizens as well as police officers.

Subsequent media reporting has revealed that IMU militants are also fighting in Afghanistan alongside the Taliban and bin Laden's forces. But this clear evidence of the terrorist threat to Uzbekistan is getting an airing only after a long period of utter obliviousness on the part of Westerners to the reality of Islamic fundamentalism in Central Asia.

The IMU is a classic Wahhabi combat organization—a murderous gang of fanatics bent on imposing the fascist style of Islam fostered by Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states and emulated by the Taliban. But until now, the IMU did an amazing job of conning Westerners—both human rights groups and governments—into believing its followers were innocent victims of outrageous persecution by the Uzbek regime.

Consider the 2000 Annual Report on International Religious Freedom, issued by the State Department only a year before Boucher's denunciation of the IMU. The report complains that the Uzbek authorities' "respect for the rights of unauthorized Muslim groups worsened, as its harsh campaign against such groups, which it perceives as terrorist security threats, intensified."

The 2000 report describes groups like the IMU as "suspected of being 'Wahhabist,' a term used loosely to encompass both suspected terrorists and . . . former students of certain independent imams or foreign madrassas (Islamic schools)." Thus is the problem of Wahhabi terrorism in Uzbekistan framed in the euphemisms typically employed at State: The groups' terrorist identity is a matter of suspicion rather than evi-

Stephen Schwartz is working on a book tentatively titled The Two Faces of Islam.

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dent fact; their ideology is only loosely defined; their instruction comes from independent rather than institutional sources, and these are foreign, not Uzbek. Unfortunately, the State Department failed entirely to note the parallels with the Taliban—another once-innocuous group of suspected terrorists and students, who left Afghanistan to study at madrassas in Pakistan.

Meanwhile, in October 1999, Human Rights Watch issued a book-length report, "Uzbekistan: Class Dismissed: Discriminatory Expulsions of Muslim Students," that is a classic of liberal accommodation to terrorism. In a two-year period beginning in 1997, 28 students were expelled from schools in Uzbekistan at various levels, primary through university, for growing Wahhabi-style beards or, in the case of women, covering themselves. A number of teachers and administrators were fired for the same or similar offenses. The students denied being Wahhabis (as Wahhabis generally do) and alleged arbitrary persecution. This issue, although it affected a minute portion of Uzbekistan's population, compelled Human Rights Watch to carry out an investigation. The report describes the bearded and covered students as "adherents of independent Islam or particularly pious."

Such terminology represents a double falsehood. Wahhabi Islam, whether in Uzbekistan or Union City, California, is no more "independent" than was the Uzbek Communist party: Wahhabi Islam in Central Asia is yet another arm of Gulf-promoted religious colonialism. Indeed, it is the traditional Sufi Islam for which Uzbekistan is famous that is truly independent, based as it is on autonomous, transnational spiritual orders. The suggestion that Central Asian Sufi Muslims are less pious than the Wahhabis is a slander comparable to calling Irish Catholics less pious than Pentecostals.

Human Rights Watch heavies Jonathan Fanton, the organization's chairman, and Holly Cartner, its executive director for Europe and Central Asia, questioned the internationally respected head of the Uzbek Islamic clergy, Mufti Abdurashid Qori Bahromov, about the expulsion of the allegedly Wahhabi students. Mufti Bahromov, who presumably knows a bit more about the situation of his country and Islam generally than these humanitarian tourists, was unsympathetic.

The expelled women students had come to him repeatedly, weeping and seeking his help in getting readmitted to their schools. The mufti had refused to help them, as is his right given that he holds a religious rather than a political function. He condemned the dismissed students as Wahhabis and as provocative, undisciplined subversives.

Undeterred, Human Rights Watch composed a list of peremptory demands, which it presented to the Uzbek state. In particular, the country should forthwith end surveillance of religious students and reinstate any fired or demoted teachers or administrators. The Uzbek government sensibly ignored the demands.

The world is learning the hard way that toleration of expansionist Wahhabism is collective suicide. Naturally, human rights advocates cherish such illusions as the idea that Uzbekistan should be as constitutionally open as the United States. But even this country is, in the aftermath of September 11, being forced to find ways to identify, isolate, and defeat Wahhabi fascists within our society as well as around the world—while maintaining, to the maximum extent possible, our traditions of human rights.

The government of Uzbekistan shares our commitment to the war on terrorism more than most Muslim countries. We should help its people complete their transition to democracy and capitalism. But we should cease interfering with their resistance to Wahhabism; indeed, we should find ways to strengthen them in that valiant cause. ♦

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Who Is Anthony Zinni?

He's the guy who knows the guy we need to be talking to. BY STEPHEN F. HAYES

SHORTLY BEFORE HE RETIRED in July 2000, General Anthony Zinni speculated about life after the Marine Corps. "The biggest shock," he mused, "will be to turn on the TV and something's happening somewhere in the world and your phone's not ringing."

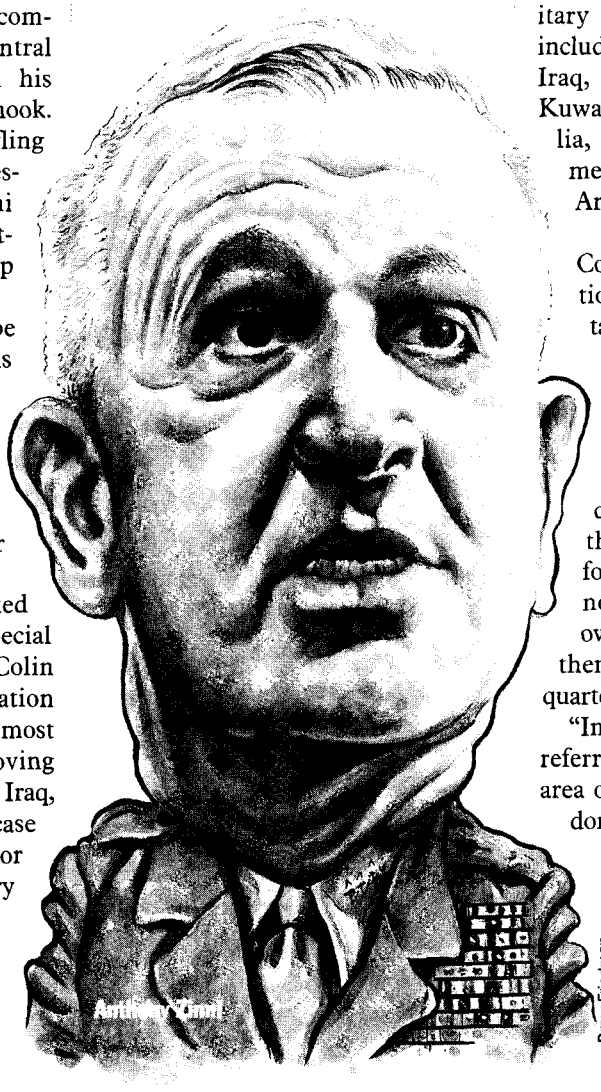
But that shock hasn't come. Zinni spent the last three years of his career as commander in chief of the U.S. Central Command, which encompasses Afghanistan and Central Asia—and since September 11 his phone has been ringing off the hook. After a couple of weeks of shuffling from media interview to congressional hearing and back, Zinni took a call from the State Department. The message? Come help us.

Precisely what Zinni will be doing in the war on terrorism is something of a mystery. But given his background, it's a safe bet that he will play a significant role. Whether that's good news or bad depends on what you think U.S. strategy in the war on terrorism should be.

Early media reports suggested that Zinni would serve as a "special adviser" to Secretary of State Colin Powell. This prompted speculation that Zinni, for years one of the most outspoken opponents of removing Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq, would help Powell make the case against including Iraq at first—or perhaps ever—in the U.S. military response to the 9/11 attacks.

But State Department spokesman Richard Boucher seemed to place some distance between Powell and Zinni at his October 2 briefing. Asked about Zinni's role, Boucher said, "I can't tell you very much at this point. He's on the books now as an unpaid, part-time consultant to Assistant Secretary Burns in the Near East Bureau, and we'll offer more on definition of duty and announcement when we can."

By last Thursday, a secretary in the State Department's Near Eastern Affairs Bureau was willing to say even less: "We don't have any knowledge of him here."



Drew Friedman

Confused, I called Susan Pittman in the State Department's Public Affairs shop. "What's the latest on General Zinni and his role at the State Department?" I asked. "I don't know if there is any latest," she replied. "As far as we know, he hasn't even shown up for work yet."

Even if no one knows—or will say—what Zinni's role will be, he is surely qualified to do it. Zinni is a decorated Vietnam veteran who spent nearly four decades in the military. As head of the U.S. Central Command—the position General Norman Schwarzkopf held during the Gulf War—he enjoyed a unique vantage point on the politics, culture, and military affairs of the region, which included, notably, Afghanistan, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, the Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

During his time at Central Command, Zinni established relationships, which he has maintained, with many of the military and political leaders of those countries. Throughout his three-year tenure, he constantly worked the phones to keep abreast of political and military developments. He visited with the leaders of "the stans"—the former Soviet republics to the north of Afghanistan—in their own countries, and hosted some of them at Central Command headquarters in Tampa, Florida.

"In our part of the world," he said, referring to the 25 countries in his area of responsibility, "everything is done by personal relationship."

Zinni is particularly close to Pakistani leader General Pervez Musharraf, who took control of that country in a coup two years ago. "They have a pretty good relationship," says a South Asian diplomat familiar with their dealings. Before

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Zinni retired, he says, "they used to talk by the phone very frequently—if not daily, then almost daily." In fact, last January, after authorities foiled a terrorist plot to bomb Los Angeles International Airport in anticipation of the millennium, Zinni got in touch with Musharraf.

As he recounted to a congressional committee shortly after the September 11 attacks, "I was asked because of my relationship with General Musharraf to call him and ask him to apprehend the leaders in this effort who were identified as being in Pakistan along the Afghan border. He said of course, and he immediately apprehended them all. I was then asked to call him again to ask if he would allow our law enforcement and other agencies to have access to them and he said of course, send them right away. I was then asked to call him again and see if he would give up computer disks and other things that were confiscated and he said of course. To make a long story short, I was asked to make five calls, and he delivered on every one of them."

Zinni's relationships could well be helpful in the effort to build and maintain the anti-terrorism coalition. But what if the United States expands its military efforts beyond Afghanistan to, say, Iraq?

Last week's reports of anthrax cases—first in Florida, then in New York—have renewed concerns about bio-terrorism, and bio-terrorism suggests state sponsors. According to Khidhir Hamza, a scientist who was forced to run Saddam Hussein's weapons program through 1994, state sponsorship suggests Iraq. ("Go after the base, not just the guys running around," Hamza told the *Washington Post*'s Marc Fisher last week. "This cannot be organized solely from Afghanistan. The main source of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East is Iraq. And Iraq has the willingness to use these weapons.")

Zinni has long been reluctant to go after Saddam. In 1998, when President Clinton and the Republican Congress agreed to send $97 million to support insurgent groups in Iraq, Zinni opposed the policy, suggesting that Saddam's ouster would result in a power vacuum in the region. The money was delayed.

More than a year later, the Iraqi opposition groups came to Washington to beg, once again, for help. Their appeals came in the heat of the 2000 presidential campaign, and both Bush and Al Gore strongly backed the funding. Zinni still opposed it.

"I don't think the military adventures that they're seeking for us to fund are reasonable," Zinni said at the time. "They are pie in the sky. They're going to lead us to a Bay of Goats, or something like that."

Zinni's views on Iraq were certainly well known to those who brought him into the State Department. They would seem to mirror his boss's, the secretary of state's. The question is whether they also reflect the views of his ultimate boss—the president. ♦

Anti-Americanism Revisited

Round up the usual suspects. BY PAUL HOLLANDER

IN THE AFTERMATH of the attacks of September 11, attempts are being made in the United States and elsewhere to understand the hatred of the attackers by shifting responsibility for it onto their target, the United States. We are witnessing a new outpouring of anti-Americanism on a scale not seen since the late 1960s. All the usual suspects, from Noam Chomsky to Paul Kennedy, Katha Pollitt, Norman Mailer, Robin Morgan, Harold Pinter, Edward Said, and Susan Sontag (to mention only a few), have seized the opportunity to vent their longstanding dislike or detestation of this society and culture. No doubt the patriotic rallying of the vast majority has stimulated this resurgence of hostility to America and a willingness to hold the United States culpable for most of the evil in the world.

Intellectuals and quasi-intellectuals, college professors, ministers, and those nostalgic for the 1960s and their youthful ideals, have come forth to affirm once again what they have always believed: that this country is a unique incarnation of injustice and hypocrisy. It is their key conviction and message that if the United States is hated, there must be good reasons why—namely, this country's endless wrongdoing at home and abroad. Of course, these same people also warmly support hate-crime legislation and the severe punishment of hate-criminals who assault women, minorities, or homosexuals. In none of these instances would they admonish the public to seek "root causes" or ask what the women, blacks, or homosexuals had done to provoke such hatred. In such cases, it is politically correct to be judgmental of the perpetrators and to hold that human beings are capable of irrational hatred and unjustifiable violence that deserves no sympathy or contextual mitigation.

The responses of "the adversary culture" to the recent outrages illuminate the persistence and intensity of a certain visceral rejection of this society. The embittered critics of America are capable of moral indignation or anger only at actions, attitudes, or policies they associate with the United States. They are totally incapable of, or unwilling to entertain or express, any

Paul Hollander is the author of Anti-Americanism: Irrational and Rational *(1995). His* Discontents: Postmodern and Postcommunist *will be published in November by Transaction Publishers.*

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critical feeling toward those who are the murderous enemies of this country. There is a huge discrepancy between the anguished anticipatory compassion these critics have already extended to the wholly unintended, innocent victims and potential victims of American strikes against the terrorists, and the far more measured compassion they have expressed for the actual and wholly intended victims of the recent attacks.

Susan Sontag notoriously directed not a trace of anger or moral indignation at the terrorists, but an enormous amount of contempt and hostility at the Bush administration and the mass media. In the London *Times*, Norman Mailer suggested that "Americans should reflect on and try to understand why so many people feel a revulsion toward the U.S." and beware that in much of the world the United States is seen as the source of "cultural and aesthetic repression." Mailer (not known for turning down handsome advances and royalties for his books) cautioned against American greed and hunger for profit.

Noam Chomsky made the claim, remarkable even for a man who denied Pol Pot's atrocities, that the recent atrocity may not have equaled an attack such as Clinton's obliteration of a pharmaceutical factory in the Sudan. Dario Fo, an Italian playwright, suggested that "regardless of who carried out the massacre, this violence is the legitimate daughter of the culture of violence, hunger, and inhumane exploitation." In France, the *New Yorker* reported, "four of the eleven candidates competing for the French presidency—three on the far left and one . . . on the far right—told the local press that the United States essentially had itself to blame for the attacks."

For a physics professor at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst quoted in the *Wall Street Journal*, "'the [American] flag is a symbol of terrorism and death and fear and destruction and oppression. . . .' Not even the events of September 11 have altered her opinions." For Katha Pollitt, writing in the *Nation*, the American "flag stands for jingoism and vengeance." A professor of journalism (also at U. Mass., Amherst) sees the attacks as "the predictable result of American . . . neglect and cowardice" that "ignored the suffering of the Palestinians." He was fully persuaded that "our policy created zealots and suicide bombers," according to the *Massachusetts Daily Collegian*.

In this vision, none of the enemies of the United States has any choice: Their actions are created by the evil the United States represents. Only American policymakers have choices, and they always make the immoral one. Thus, a U. Mass., Amherst, sociology professor pleads for finding ways "to reduce those alienating actions whereby we create our enemies."

Understanding the pathology of murderous hatred does not require a new round of collective self-flagellation and guilty soul-searching.

Meanwhile, down the road in Northampton, Massachusetts, a reader writes to the local newspaper, the *Daily Hampshire Gazette*, that "we need the courage and honesty to search our souls, recognize our wrongdoings." On the same page a minister warns against "ruthless patriotism" but not against the ruthless fanaticism of those who killed thousands, while other writers insist that "retaliation is not the answer," what we need is unspecified "non-violent justice, not revenge," and "compassion rather than aggression." Peace groups advocate "justice not revenge," except when they're endorsing the slogan of black protesters, "No justice, no peace."

For some, taking action against the terrorists is "racist scapegoating." Harvard students parade with the sign "War is also terrorism." A writer in the local "alternative" newspaper, the *Advocate*, talks about the "newfound obsession with terrorism" as if the recent events deserved minimal attention. Several contributors to the same paper treat the attacks as a welcome excuse for the forces of darkness in the United States to strangle all civil liberties: "The terror attacks of September 11 wiped the slate clean. All the psychological and moral prohibitions on the reactionary right have been lifted. The same thing happened in Germany after World War I."

Such hysterical anticipation is reminiscent of predictions, back in the 1960s, of imminent "fascist" repression, at once perversely hoped for to prove the utter degradation of the American political system and welcomed as the proper precondition for its revolutionary destruction.

Thus, Brown University hastened to issue "a curriculum guide on how to discuss the attacks in the classroom . . . that called for understanding why people resent the United States." And at a Quaker meeting at Haverford College, the *New York Times* reported, "an emeritus professor . . . agonized over why the United States was the most violent nation on earth and ended by saying, 'We are complicit.'" Doubtless, on every major campus identical sentiments are being expressed.

In contrast to all these sentiments, I suggest that the suicide attacks were the purest expression of pathological hatred and fanaticism, the most intense and irrational manifestation of anti-Americanism legitimated by religious beliefs and the conviction that modernity, with all the moral uncertainties it creates—embodied by the United States—is the source of evil in the world.

Understanding the pathology of murderous hatred does not require a new round of collective self-flagellation and guilty soul-searching. These crimes were committed by individuals who chose their actions freely and with utmost deliberation and under no compulsion other than the prodding of their irrational beliefs. The perverted idealism of the perpetrators no more legitimates their actions than other types of idealistic beliefs justified the mass murders of the past, also undertaken to cleanse the world. ♦

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At Anthrax Ground Zero

This is no time for panic, they kept saying in Florida.

By Matt Labash

Palm Beach County

If any place in the country deserves a respite from dubious headlines, it is surely Palm Beach County. "I remember May of 2000, when that Lake Worth middle schooler shot his teacher in the face," recalls a *Palm Beach Post* staff writer, pining for a simpler time. "I thought that would be the worst story we'd ever see." Little did he know how much worse it would get. Last November, slow-witted voters and slower-witted officials kicked off the most grisly debacle in U.S. elections history. Last month, it was discovered that the region played host to over half the terrorists involved in the September 11 attacks. And last week brought perhaps the saddest and scariest news—a *Sun* tabloid employee died after being infected with anthrax, evidence of what might be the only bioterrorism attack in America since followers of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh poisoned a Shakey's salad bar in 1984.

But as veteran observers know, tragedy never lasts long around here without giving way to farce. And so it is again, as the national press corps deploys to the "new ground zero," the upscale office park of American Media Inc. in Boca Raton, where the *Globe*, the *National Enquirer*, and just about every other tabloid that graces grocery-store racks is published. We have not come, however, in search of the Horn-Faced Lady or the Dog-Faced Man, whose exploits are championed in the *Weekly World News*.

Rather, it is here that Robert Stevens, a much-beloved *Sun* photo editor, was exposed to anthrax spores of unknown origin (they were found on his computer keyboard), causing his death on October 5. It is from here that hundreds of AMI employees have been evacuated, as they await word on their nasal swabs and blood samples, which should reveal whether they too have been invaded by the anthrax bacterium (two additional employees have tested positive, though they appear to be doing okay). It is here that journalists keep 24-hour vigils behind yellow police tape, waiting to catch a glimpse of . . . no one's exactly sure what. Though personnel from the Centers for Disease Control and the FBI mill around the off-limits parking lot, while men sporadically exit the building in snow-white hazardous materials suits that make them look like menacing Easter bunnies, there are no soot-covered firemen or leather-faced iron workers to romanticize, as we did at the original ground zero. "Unless they bring the anthrax out in handcuffs," offers one impatient reporter, "there's nothing to see here."

Because of the lull, many of us move several miles up the road, to American Media Inc.'s accounting building. Here, displaced tabloid writers temporarily work out of claustrophobic cubicles in a pastel-hued building the color of Don Johnson's old undershirts. A supreme irony takes shape as the mainstream media stake out the tabloid media, who have, under duress, become a respectable lot, given to restraint, quick with a "no comment," generally resistant to our invading their lives as they have so many others'. Perhaps it is because they don't want to disclose any particulars in an ongoing investigation. Perhaps, as some have alleged, their corporate masters have threatened to fire them if they talk. Or perhaps, most of us suspect, they just don't want to waste their good anecdotes in somebody else's newspaper.

Whatever the case, they are largely uncooperative. So the mainstream journalists tan themselves in the tabloid empire's parking lot, waiting for our counterparts to leave the building as we slalom around grouchy security guards ("They don't want you here," says one) or just size up our prey like hunters in a duck blind. When the rare employee does talk—usually on background—he has as many questions as answers: How did this happen? Is it related to September 11? Why us?

That last question might have an obvious answer. While health and law enforcement authorities have refused to deduce a terrorist act from the circumstantial evidence (despite their belief that several terrorists had subscriptions to American Media titles, and that nearly

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one-quarter of the 300-plus associates in their network at one time lived in Florida), AMI would make an ideal target, as it accounts for 25 million weekly readers. Skeptics say that the tabloids make lots of enemies, which is true. But it is unlikely that actor Russell Crowe has access to lethal strains of anthrax. Plus, to carry out such a heinous act, he'd have to be really, really mad about the *National Examiner*'s reporting that the former "real-life Maximus" now has a "double chin and a jelly belly."

American Media chief executive David Pecker—who initially rejected the bioterrorism theory, then came to embrace it after a third employee was found to have suffered exposure—has said that his tabloids haven't been any harder on Osama bin Laden and Co. than any other news organizations. But a survey of post-September 11 issues says otherwise.

The *Star*, for instance, has alleged that Mohammed Atta was a clumsy pick-up artist, "kind of goofy" and "determined to see a naked woman before he died." Bin Laden, the *Star* alleged, used to be a serious drinker who'd get in bar fights over prostitutes. The *Weekly World News* has called Bin Laden a "lily livered piece of crap" with "dung breath," while the *National Enquirer* offered Osama Toilet Paper to "wipe the smile off bin Laden's face." But no media outlet has hit him harder than the *Globe*. A *Globe* cover featured bin Laden under a "Wanted Dead or Alive" headline ("or alive" was crossed out), then disclosed bin Laden's secret poison recipe (corn, green beans, spoiled meat, and "about two spoonfuls of excrement"). To add insult, the tabloid alleged he was a "mentally ill, drug-addicted fanatic" with an "inner rage" caused by his "underdeveloped sexual organs." The *New York Times*, for all its thoroughness, has not trafficked in such details.

A recent Palm Beach Post survey revealed that 90 percent of the public doesn't believe officials are being completely forthcoming.

Since no one yet knows how anthrax entered the building, dark theories have abounded, though many have already been discarded. One news report last week indicated that a "cryptic e-mail" had been sent by a former *National Enquirer* intern believed to have been of Middle Eastern descent. The e-mail promised co-workers, "You'll remember me from all the little surprises I hid around the office." But the intern, 23-year-old Jordan Arizmendi, turned out to be a Jewish communications major who lives with his parents in Ft. Lauderdale. The only farewell gift he'd left in the office was some bagels and cream cheese. (After Arizmendi cleared his name, I offered to take him out to dinner to discuss his travails. "Sorry dude," he declined, obviously shaken, "I got Larry King at nine.")

Another theory, since downplayed by investigators, is that the anthrax was transmitted in powdered form from a letter sent to the AMI offices, which was addressed to Jennifer Lopez and contained a Star of David. (The *Globe* recently reported that Lopez had determined that the best way to show the terrorists America can't be intimidated was to go ahead with "her fabulous $500,000 wedding.") This scenario is particularly terrifying to AMI employees, who are in the habit of receiving all sorts of nut mail. "We're used to stupid stuff coming in the mail, which is why nobody would pay attention to such a letter," says Lynn Allison, who reports on medical issues for several of the tabloids. "I've had love letters from prison inmates, letters from religious fanatics saying 'God will strike you dead,' letters from people who spotted Elvis in a Florida Winn-Dixie."

But other employees aren't so cavalier. One freelancer, who introduces herself as Sheri, is incensed because she's covering the Nostradamus beat, and the 16th-century mystic, who seems to have predicted everything else about the September 11 attack, missed the anthrax scare altogether. Sheri suspects that Stepford-like public health officials, in a mad stampede to promote calm, are skimping on the details. "How can we make absolute claims about something we're not familiar with?" she asks. "I hear Cipro [the antibiotic that all AMI employees have been given] isn't even the right thing to be taking if you've had exposure. I heard they tested it on monkeys, and many of them still died."

Sheri is hardly alone in her skepticism. Not for nothing did a recent *Palm Beach Post* survey reveal that 90 percent of the public doesn't believe officials are being completely forthcoming. Part of the distrust is undoubtedly due to the clumsiness with which many local officials have handled the anthrax affair. When the state's Department of Health shut down the building (two and a half days after Stevens died), they did so on a Sunday. AMI employees were ordered to report to a Delray Beach health department annex early Monday morning to have their noses swabbed and to be given antibiotics. But in a show of incompetence that could rival even Palm Beach County election officials, health planners forgot it was Columbus Day and the facility was closed. Frightened tabloid reporters were forced to wait in lines outside for over three hours (several suffered heat exhaustion), until someone turned up with a key.

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Additionally, here is just a partial list of the many errors, misrepresentations, and reversals of previously unshakable assertions that have transpired in just one week's time: (a) While numerous health officials first suggested that the anthrax infection likely came from natural environmental sources (even though Stevens suffered from inhalation anthrax, the most lethal and rarest type), half a week later, CDC director Jeffrey Koplan told Senator Bob Graham that the chances of its occurring without human intervention were "nil to none." (b) Health officials first said there were no additional cases, though tests later showed two employees had had anthrax exposure. (c) While the state's top epidemiologist said there was "no reason to believe at this time this was an attack at all," the FBI and Attorney General John Ashcroft, who still refuse to categorize this as the work of terrorists, took an additional five days to make the no-duh upgrade, finally calling theirs a "criminal investigation." (d) While Florida's secretary of health, John Agwunobi, cannot go a day without assuring citizens that anthrax isn't contagious, the very information sheet given to AMI employees, which was put out by the Florida Department of Health, admits that in cases of cutaneous anthrax (an infection acquired through a cut or abrasion, and the form of the disease that was detected Friday in a New York NBC employee), drainage from sores can actually be contagious.

The only line that local, state, and national officials can seem to stay together on is their choral mantra: "This is no time to panic." Promoting cool-headedness in times of adversity is an admirable goal. But an increasingly reasonable question persists: If now is not the time, then when? The newest infection in New York will likely cause an additional run on antibiotics, which are already growing scarce in Florida. There are, of course, anthrax vaccines—but they're only available to the military. If there is, indeed, some sort of widespread bioterrorism attack, officials might want to desist from the Pollyanna shtick. Though inhalation anthrax contracted from natural causes is exceedingly rare (only 18 Americans have had it the past century), when the disease isn't treated with antibiotics before symptoms appear, it carries an 85 percent mortality rate. There are worse ways to die than from inhalation anthrax (Crimean-Congo fever, for instance, sees its victims bleed to death from every orifice). Still, fever, dyspnea, vomiting and abdominal pain, followed by delirium and hemorrhagic meningitis, doesn't exactly sound like a Jennifer Lopez wedding.

But if we are on the cusp of a state of emergency, it certainly doesn't feel that way—at least not at the Emergency Operations Center in West Palm Beach, the base of operations for a cross-section of public health and law enforcement types. Trimmed in the garish aquamarine that is permissible only south of Jupiter, Florida, the building feels like home to many reporters. Nearly one year ago, it was here that we assembled daily (and nightly) to get butterfly ballot updates, as officials like Judge Charles Burton, Supervisor of Elections Theresa LePore, and County Commissioner Carol Roberts (affectionately deemed the Three Stooges) would call press conferences to tell us what they didn't know.

With no Jesse Jackson entourage obstructing the doorway these days, it's much easier to enter the building. And in keeping with the president's directive, Palm Beach citizens appear to be carrying on their regular business, as the operations center is visited by a steady stream of "adult entertainers." In accordance with the city's stripper ordinance, which mandates that topless dancers must be of age, hard-looking women traipse through the lobby to secure their identification cards.

Just as I make the acquaintance of one Lisa Johnson, who cuts an elegant swath in her white bun-huggers and red mesh T-shirt, there is a media stampede. Lt. Governor Frank Brogan has materialized from an elevator. He is down from Tallahassee on anthrax visitation, and he looks as calm and collected as a Methodist deacon. Flanked by a posse that includes the state's secretary of health and our old friend Carol Roberts (the pouty, Gore-supporting third Stooge), Brogan has no news to break. Instead, he wants to express "how proud we are" of local officials for "the way they've maintained calm." Addressing a group of testy reporters, many of whom haven't had a call returned in days, Brogan goes on to say, "Communication is a very important part of how we deal with this issue."

As Brogan concludes, most of us turn our attention to Roberts, who asserts she has no expertise on anthrax, a claim that is a rather easy sell. Back out in the parking lot, I ask adult entertainer Lisa how the anthrax news is affecting her. "It's crazy," she says, her belly tattoos quaking so violently that I can't tell if they're dolphins or just some sort of Rorschach ink blot.

She introduces me to her companion, Thomas Davis, an older gent who owns a yacht sales company. Asked the same question, Davis goes into the kind of rant one can hear anywhere on the streets of South Florida, though not in the Emergency Operations Center. "I don't think the government's telling us everything," he says. "If they can't catch a bunch of terrorists that are six feet tall, blowing up airplanes, how are they going to get a handle on an invisible, microscopic situation?" With salty, weather-beaten features, Davis doesn't look like he scares easy. But he's scared now. "This isn't Chicken-Little stuff—'the sky is falling,'" he says."Hey man, the sky already fell." ♦

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"And a Child Shall Lead Them"

No sooner had I closed my eyes then I was there. I stood before the great man. I looked up at him. He leaned forward in his chair smiling down at me.

"Welcome, my boy," he began in his friendly, faintly high-pitched, Midwestern drawl. "I've been reading scriptures 'And a Child shall lead them' gave me this idea. Like myself, you don't patent nor lay claim to certain ideas. So, I give you this one. I pray it will lead to someone else improving on it."

"Thank-you, Mr. President, for thinking of me. Whatever your idea is, I'll pass it on to whomever it may be who will feel free to enhance it," said I.

"Here's the idea," the great man drew a deep breath and continued, "We're dropping bombs on terrorists in Afghanistan. That's as it should be. We're dropping food to starving millions there and medical supplies as well. That's also as it should be. We have something of incalculable worth left to drop."

"What, Sir?" I asked.

"The beloved children of America," he replied. "I see you're shocked. Don't be. In the United States, thousands of Muslim children live in peace and perfect harmony with countless other thousands of children of different faiths. They worship, secure and safe, in their mosques. They play each day with other boys and girls who worship in synagogues and churches."

"True, Sir, true." I agreed.

"At the right time and appropriate moment, America tells Afghanistan.

We propose sending hundreds of American Muslim children to that country. Along with their parents, they will arrive aboard peaceful passenger planes trusting to land safely upon the terrain of Afghanistan. No bombs. No bombers, only boys and girls from America of the Muslim faith. They meet Afghanistan's boys and girls. They get to know and play with them in peace and happiness."

"A fine idea, Mr. President. Please continue, Sir." I asked him.

"America's children bring gifts for Afghanistan's children," he went on. "They become true friends. They rejoice in each other's company. There's a precedent for all of this. America calls it 'The Peace Corp.' It continues to be a great success."

"Of course, you're right, Sir," I exclaimed. "There surely is a wonderfully, triumphant precedent." I told him.

"That's not all," the great man continued. "Make it perfectly clear America will provide the necessary passenger planes to bring to the United States an equal number of Afghanistan children together with their parents all of the Muslim faith. You can add the whole trip will be financed by all Americans who will gladly pay in taxes for such a worthy cause."

"What else, Mr. President?" I was anxious to know.

"See to it that the Muslim children from Afghanistan worship in America's Muslim mosques that dot the length and breadth of the United States." The President said.

"A wonderful idea," I told him. "And in the kind and gentle hands of President Bush and his colleagues, the idea can be arranged in any fashion that suites them."

"That's it, my boy," the President responded. "The future is in the hands of the world's children. Make America a leader in that fact. Snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. There are no losers, only winners. Let not a single innocent victim cruelly murdered on September 11 ever for a minute be made to feel they may have died in vain. If it has merit, let this idea become another monument to their everlasting memory!"

To which all I could barely even stammer, "Amen, Sir, Amen."

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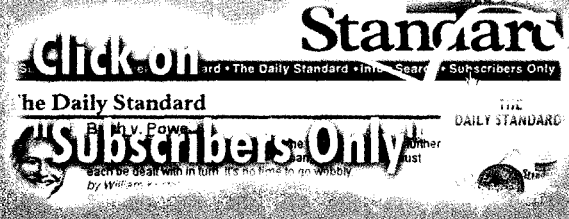

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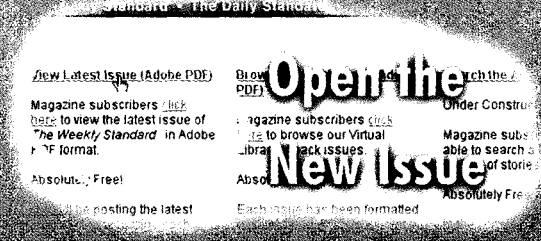

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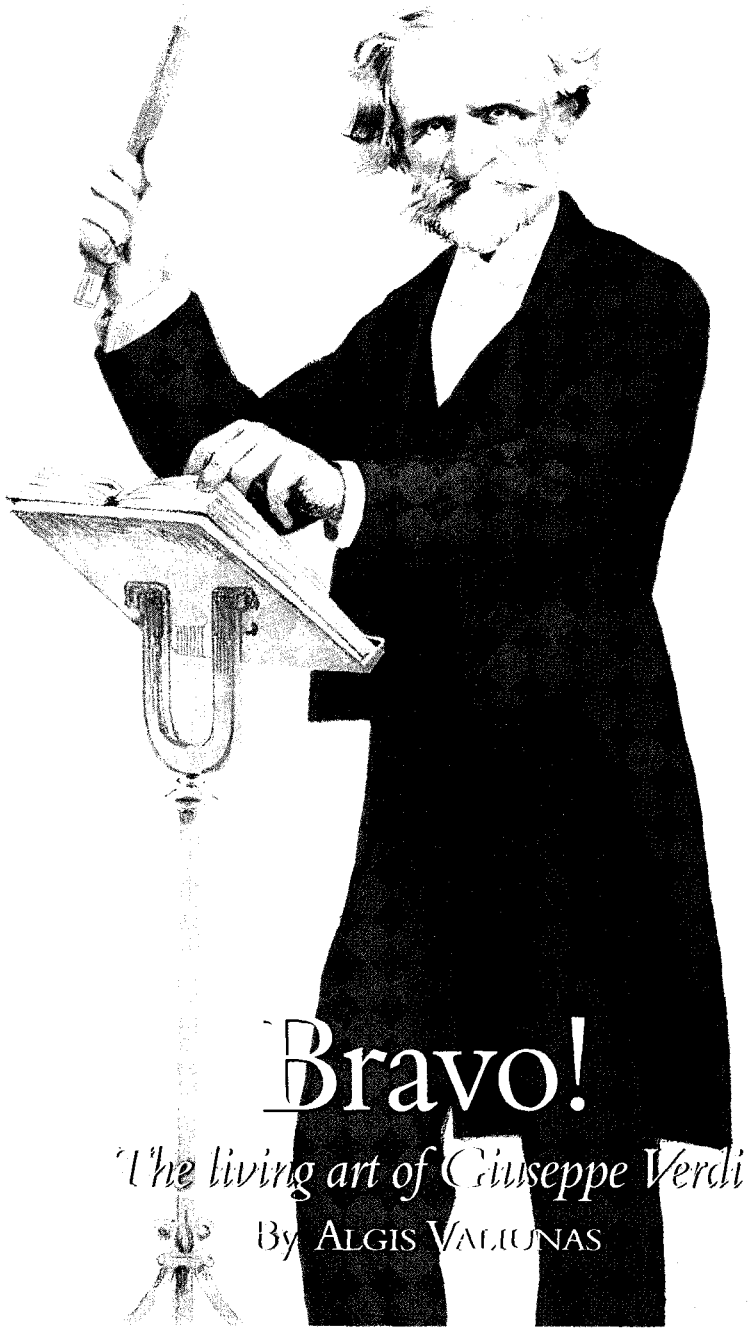

Giuseppe Verdi caricatured in *Vanity Fair*, February 15, 1879. Hulton / Archive.

Bravo!

The living art of Giuseppe Verdi

By Algis Valiunas

This year marks the centenary of Giuseppe Verdi's death, and you can hardly move without meeting some sign of it. Companies with short schedules, such as the Atlanta Opera and the Palm Beach Opera, have devoted the entire season to Verdi; the rather grander San Francisco Opera conducted a Verdi festival this summer; the Kirov Opera of St. Petersburg went to London to perform six Verdi operas and the *Requiem* in ten days at Covent Garden; the Metropolitan Opera has put on a pair of nationally televised Verdi evenings and issued a three-CD set with fifty of its most famous singers since Caruso singing Verdi; the Sarasota Opera inaugurated a Verdi cycle that will run through 2013 and present all of his operas with "traditional, romantic staging"—a commodity that, in an era of operatic stage directors with big new ideas, is getting harder to come by with each passing year.

Algis Valiunas is a writer in Greenacres, Florida.

Perhaps the highlight of the current Verdi celebration is EMI's issue of the digitally remastered set *Les introuvables du chant verdien*, a collection on eight CDs of the composer's greatest hits in hard-to-find performances from 1903 to 1954. Even the most fanatical collectors are bound to find unfamiliar gems here—although the accompanying notes do not trouble to point out just what riches are included. Some digging is required to find out that the tenor, Francesco Tamagno, singing Otello's *Niun mi tema* in 1903, happened to be the first Otello in 1887; that the baritone Victor Maurel tossing off Falstaff's patter song *Quand'ero paggio* (with two encores, one in French) in 1907 was the first Falstaff in 1893 (and caused Verdi endless headaches with his maniacal egotism); that the bass Francesco Navarini intoning *Il lacerato spirito* from *Simon Boccanegra* in 1907 was the Grand Inquisitor in the debut of the Italian version of *Don Carlo* in 1884. Giuseppe Borgatti in 1928 gets perfect the unbearable weight that his ruinous folly has become for the broken Otello. Alexander Kipnis in 1931 outshines Navarini by portraying Fiesco's despair at his daughter's death with burnished obsidian tone, beauty of line, and a low F-sharp of preternatural potency.

When you add in all the others—Mattia Battistini, Fedora Barbieri, Jussi Björling, Eva Turner, Beniamino Gigli, Tito Gobbi, Boris Christoff, Enrico Caruso, Titta Ruffo, Antonina Neshdanova, Luisa Tetrazzini, Nellie Melba, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Helge Roswaenge, Lilli Lehmann, Ezio Pinza—you have as fine a collection as has ever been assembled. Unfortunately, the package fails to provide texts for the music, so that unless the listener is intimate with some seventeen operas he will be pretty much at sea. The words matter, because Verdi was one of the supreme musical dramatists and perhaps the greatest of musical moralists—that is, a thinker of the utmost seriousness whose natural medium was music for the stage.

Born in 1813, Verdi was the son of a tavern keeper in Roncole, a village in Parma. He was fortunate in his choice of father, who bought the boy a broken spinet, and had a neighbor fix it. (Verdi kept it the rest of his life.) The village organist taught him to play, well

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enough that at the age of twelve he replaced his teacher in the organ loft.

But there were things he would never learn in Roncole, and so his father sent him up the road to Busseto, which offered music instruction in its school, as well as a military band and an amateur philharmonic society. The stripling Verdi took musical Busseto by storm, learning to play several instruments, composing hundreds of little works and not a few larger ones for local consumption, and wooing Margherita Barezzi, whose father was a well-to-do merchant.

At eighteen Verdi applied for admission to the Milan Conservatory, but the examiners were put off by his advanced age—fourteen was the usual cutoff—and by certain yokel mannerisms of his at the keyboard. Their rejection daunted him, but Barezzi's financial assistance enabled Verdi to study privately in Milan with Vincenzo Lavigna, an operatic composer and a conductor at La Scala. After three years of city living, he returned to Busseto, where he married Margherita and settled into the position of *maestro di musica* for the town—but only after a protracted controversy that pitted the forces of respectable Christendom, who opposed the self-proclaimed atheist Verdi, against the secular types of the philharmonic.

Bigger things were soon brewing, and Milan beckoned once again: In 1839, his first opera, *Oberto, conte di San Bonifacio*, had its premiere at La Scala. But life wasn't entirely easy. Margherita bore Verdi two children, both of whom died in infancy. Then in 1840, as he was writing his second opera *Un giorno di regno* (the only comedy in his repertoire until the twilight masterpiece *Falstaff*), Margherita came down with rheumatic fever and died six days later. Verdi's intimates feared he would go out of his mind. "A third coffin goes out of my house. I was alone! Alone!" Music held no consolation, and he vowed never to compose again.

The hardheaded impresario Bartolomeo Merelli, however, would not let the composer out of his contract, and Verdi hobbled his way to the end of the score. The opera bombed, closing after one night to the Italian audience's hooting and whistling. But some months later Merelli convinced Verdi to take a look at a promising libretto spurned by Otto Nicolai.

The result was *Nabucco*, which captured the heart of the Italian populace. Verdi's music spoke with more telling fervor than even the most inspired political oratory to the Italian longing for unity and freedom from Austrian domination.

The highlight of *Nabucco* was the chorus *Va, pensiero, sull'ali dorate* ("Go, thought on golden wings"), in which Hebrew slaves captive in Babylon sing of their yearning for their native land and ask God for the fortitude to endure their exile. During a rehearsal, the carpenters who were rebuilding some scenery paid no attention to the soloists who were trying to sing over their noise; but they stopped their hammering and listened in reverent silence to *Va, pensiero* then thumped on the stage with their tools to register their approbation.

Verdi, c. 1850

Hulton / Archive

When Verdi's next work, *I Lombardi alla prima crociata*, had its premiere at La Scala in 1843, the Milanese audience had no trouble understanding who the Lombards and the Saracens were really meant to be in the battle cry *La Santa Terra oggi nostra sarà* ("The Holy Land will be ours today"). In 1845, Verdi's newest musical and patriotic triumph *Giovanna d'Arco*, drew rowdy crowds that the police did their best to break up, but without success. Verdi belonged to the people of Italy as no serious artist could today. He became a political figure in his own right, elected to the first parliament of the newly founded Kingdom of Italy in 1860. The popular shout *Viva Verdi* became a national rallying-cry, with a double significance: The composer's name was an acronym for Vittorio Emmanuele, Re d'Italia—Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy—and it was never really clear whether the cheer honored Verdi or the king more.

Although Verdi was deadly serious about politics, his art was the principal object of his political passion. From 1842 to 1851 he was remorselessly prolific, turning out operas at the rate of more than one a year. *Nabucco*, *Ernani*, and *Macbeth* still have their occasional place in the repertory of major opera houses, but for the most part, the works produced in this period are rarely staged anymore. Verdi was later to speak of this time as his years "in the galley." As he wrote to a woman friend in 1846, "Who knows whether one day I shall not wake up a millionaire! What a beautiful word, full of meaning! Beautiful! And how empty by comparison are fame, glory, genius." (He left an estate worth over $23 million in today's money.)

The woman Verdi fell in love with after Margherita's death was Giuseppina Strepponi, who sang Abigaille in the opening run of *Nabucco* but who was really not terribly impressive a singer. It was an unlikely match. She had gone through innumerable lovers and at the age of twenty-six had borne three or four illegitimate children by at least two different fathers. But Verdi loved her, and she proved to love him back. In 1848, he bought an estate outside Busseto and installed Strepponi, to whom he was not married. The

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Both paintings: CORBIS.

Left: Augusto Mussini's portrait of Margherita Barezzi Verdi. Right: The Triumphal March in Aïda.

townspeople responded with ire. In an 1852 letter that he wrote in response to a severe chastisement from Antonio Barezzi, Margherita's father, the composer declared: "I demand my freedom of action, because everyone has the right to it, and because my nature rebels against doing as others do." The hackneyed self-congratulation in this heroic rejection of desiccated convention is mockable, but Strepponi's love for Verdi did change his life, and he loved her well enough to marry her, in 1859.

Not unexpectedly, Verdi arrogated to himself the freedom to ignore his vows when they became inconvenient, as his wife got old and bedeviled him with newfound religion. His prima donna became an overripe second banana, and another soprano, twenty years younger, took up where Strepponi left off: Teresa Stolz sang Verdi rather better than Strepponi had—she was a soloist in the original performance of the *Requiem Mass* in 1874, and starred throughout Europe in his operas—and more important she made the aging composer feel young. Their affair caused a scandal, and Strepponi's jealousy nearly drove Verdi around the bend. She held on until her death in 1897. Thereafter, Verdi was Stolz's alone, and their correspondence from 1900, when he was eighty-seven and she sixty-six, is remarkable for its erotic passion.

Verdi's art treats desires so intense that mere speech is unable to do them justice: They must be sung. Nobility, and particularly what it means to a democratic age, is the great theme of Verdi's operas. He works on a broader canvas than Mozart, takes in the grand clashing ambitions of political men as well as their erotic natures, and traces the subtle connections between the two sorts of passion.

Not enough attention has been paid to Verdi's force of mind. He is regarded as the possessor of an exquisite lyric gift and a concomitant deficiency in brainpower. It was really Wagner who created the taste by which Verdi's stature is diminished. Anyone so engagingly melodious, so much in the Italian tradition, cannot be really serious, the way Germans and their admirers are. The highest praise that advanced musical thinkers accord Verdi is that he contributed to the happy demise of the number opera, with its succession of sharply delineated formal episodes that subordinated drama to vocal display, and replaced it with a freely flowing action served by "endless melody." Thus it is only Verdi's late operas—*Otello*, *Falstaff*, and perhaps as well *Aïda* and *Simon Boccanegra* in its revised version—that are considered in the same breath as Wagner as intellectual productions.

Of course, little of this matters to the listeners who flock to his operas. Verdi understood love and rendered its effect superbly. Even erotic villainy gets its full measure of musical beauty, though it is a dramatically complex beauty that reveals the less than savory nature of the longing expressed. In the scene that opens Act II of *Nabucco*, the Babylonian princess Abigaille (who is in love with the captive Hebrew officer Ismaele, who for his part loves her sister Fenena, who is not really Abigaille's sister, for Abigaille is an adopted slave) first vents her fury at being unlucky in love and swears that everyone will pay for her unhappiness, then changes gears and remembers how she used to be so much in love that others' tears would make her weep. Verdi demonstrates how, even for the wicked Abigaille, love has the power to change the world completely (although not for long, as the high priest soon enters with the news that Fenena is freeing the Hebrews, and Abigaille launches into a *cabaletta* of insane bloody-mindedness, vowing that the throne shall be hers and everyone shall grovel at her feet).

To similar effect, Verdi gives the baritone villain in *Il Trovatore*, the Conte di Luna, as heartfelt an expression of love for Leonora as he does the tenor hero, Manrico, who also burns for her and, unlike Luna, is loved in return. The aria *Questa o quella* near the beginning of *Rigoletto*, in which the Duke of Mantua sings of his ceaseless pursuit of sexual pleasure, seems at first the natural effervescence of cavalier high spirits. Later, however, after the duke has raped Rigoletto's daughter, Gilda, the catchy jauntiness of that first melody is shown to conceal a callous brutality. Verdi lets one feel the

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attractiveness of a potent virility that eagerly takes whatever pleasure the world offers, then reveals the duke's depraved indifference to the suffering of the creatures who furnish those pleasures.

Rigoletto himself is drawn with equal subtlety. No man loves his daughter more than Rigoletto does Gilda, and their duet *Piangi, fanciulla* in which the hunchbacked jester consoles his daughter as best he can after her rape, is perhaps the most heartbreaking music Verdi ever wrote. Yet even paternal love that seems pure can be tragically contaminated by self-love. The subsequent duet *Si, vendetta* shows Rigoletto to be thinking not so much of his daughter's pain as of his own dishonor. The music describes the sudden onset of virile resolution in a man who has made a career of being less than a man, the courtiers' laughingstock and lickspittle; but there emerges as well a savage gaiety, rendered by a repeated rhythmic sequence of dotted half-note, dotted eighth-note, and sixteenth-note, at the prospect of the terrible fate he shall arrange for his tormentor. Gilda, who loves the duke in spite of everything, urges forgiveness; Rigoletto won't hear of it. Ultimately, she will undo her father's scheme to murder the duke and will die in the place of the man she loves. Verdi's musical depiction of these characters and the moral universe they inhabit—and do their part to create—leaves one richly distressed and raptly flummoxed as only the greatest tragedies can do.

One can find the same subtlety of imagination in all of Verdi—from *La Traviata* to *Ernani* to *Aïda*. But Verdi's most complex and thrilling treatment of erotic and political passions is *Don Carlo*, based on Friedrich Schiller's play. Don Carlo, Infante of Spain, is engaged to Elisabetta, Princess of France; deeply in love with each other, they appear bound for the greatest happiness, but then for reasons of state the French king decides his daughter ought to marry instead Carlo's father, King Filippo II. Carlo pines for his lost love, and his friend Rodrigo, Marquis of Posa, coaxes him to snap out of it and to turn his attention to more serious matters—convincing Filippo to grant Flanders freedom from Spanish oppression. In no time Carlo and Rodrigo are singing of liberation with the same passion that Carlo just sang of love.

Verdi in 1897

Hulton / Archive

Addressing the king, Rodrigo in his clarion baritone delivers a soaring exhortation to advance the cause of human freedom, while the king's gruff rumbling bass is the perfect instrument to express the belief that depraved humanity requires a stern hand to keep it in line. It is hard to say whether politics or love is the more perilous activity. Carlo channels his unfortunate romantic longing into a hot-headed political defiance, in the name of freedom; against the backdrop of an auto-da-fé, father and son face each other with swords drawn, and Carlo ends in the paternal dungeon.

The king's terrible loneliness, the isolation of a public man obsessed with a private passion, is highlighted in his soliloquy *Ella giammai m'amo*, the most beautiful aria ever written for the bass voice. The long orchestral prelude to the aria is a masterpiece of dramatic writing. As he sits alone in his study at dawn, having spent a sleepless night there, strings play a simple haunting figure of four eighth-notes, repeat it once, play a very similar figure of four sixteenth-notes, repeat it three more times with the slightest variation, then reiterate the whole phrase: The passage evokes a tortured mind that cannot turn from the one thought that consumes it; that agonizing thought speeds up and slows down but never lets up its torment. Love holds no happiness for anyone.

When love fails, it's back to ruling the world, or saving it. Rodrigo sacrifices himself for Carlo, seeing to it that he, not Carlo, is blamed for the Flanders revolt (with the intention that Carlo then go to Flanders and actually lead the revolt). Agents of the Inquisition murder Rodrigo while he is visiting Carlo in prison. With Rodrigo's selflessness as his inspiration, Carlo tells Elisabetta honor now means more to him than love. The two of them shall meet again in heaven, he predicts, and enjoy the bliss they were denied on earth, but for now there is the world's urgent business to attend to: Carlo is on his way to Flanders when King Filippo and the Grand Inquisitor step out of the shadows and block his path. Carlo appears to be done for, and Schiller's play ends with that suggestion; the opera, however, contrives his salvation, through the intercession of a mysterious friar, evidently the ghost of Carlo's grandfather Carlo V (the noble emperor in *Ernani*), who whisks the young prince off into the protective darkness of the monastic cloister. Is this death for Carlo? Hard to say; but it is certainly not life as he has known it. In *Don Carlo* the only chance of sal-

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vation—a word pointedly repeated both in Schiller's play and Verdi's opera—is to be had in leaving the tragic world of forlorn erotic hope and thwarted political decency. Verdi never put much stock in heaven—Strepponi complained of the baleful coldness of her husband's unbelief—but in his most thoughtful opera whatever comes after death is preferable to the best that life has to offer.

Verdi's was a severe and disenchanted nobility, and in the *Messa da Requiem*, his one notable non-operatic work, one sees both the greatness and the spiritual confinement of that attitude. In this mass, written specifically in memory of the great novelist and patriot Alessandro Manzoni, there are passages that make one fear for one's soul: The best-known portion, the *Dies irae* chorus, calls up the swirling tumult of infernal winds, and there is nothing else quite as hair-raising in sacred music.

And yet, there is really nothing comparable in the mass to make one thrill at the prospect of heaven. In the final *Libera me*, the choral response to the soprano's desperation effectively puts to rest the obsession with last things, and the soprano comes at last to share this wise serenity. Man's triumph after death is the work of sound secular sentiment and force of mind; the overpowering passions associated with eternity are overcome by a steady reasonableness at home in this world. One feels Verdi's inadequacy under the aspect of eternity if one compares this with, say, Hector Berlioz's *Requiem*, which shows what it is to be a soul confronted with the full power of divine majesty and the rapturous mystery of God's justice. Where Verdi's *Requiem* treats death as a man of little or no faith must face it, without any assurance of what lies beyond, or with a premonition of the eternal inane, Berlioz's is confident of the next world and casts human morality in its light. Berlioz's music seems the work of a soul in secure possession of the everlasting truth; these are the sounds that heaven might make in response to human importunity.

Still, Verdi's art belongs among the most unabashedly noble of the nineteenth century. To make great feelings and actions seem possible to people who do not ordinarily think of such matters, to remind an audience that its moral horizons could be extended beyond customary limits: This was Verdi's achievement. Opera, like modern art in general, would take a different direction in the name of democratic inclusiveness after Verdi, toward the cultivation of sentiments too base even to be considered monstrous. In Verdi's own day, Bizet's *Carmen*, Mascagni's *Cavalleria rusticana*, Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* effectively closed out the nineteenth century and ushered in the twentieth with a festival of moral haplessness that featured low-life sex and knife play. Alban Berg's *Lulu*, widely considered the greatest twentieth-century opera, recounts the misadventures of a beautiful and unfeeling slut who leaves a sad trail of human flotsam in her wake and herself ends up a victim of Jack the Ripper. Modernism turns romanticism inside out and thus makes life look as ugly, brutal, and perverse as possible. Twentieth-century operas as stylistically various as Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, Berg's *Wozzeck*, Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*, and Britten's *Peter Grimes* all share a fascination with the very worst the world has to offer. Degradation is their meat.

These operas are all remarkable works of art, attaining a severe and disturbing beauty, audaciously rich in their musical dramaturgy. But they are not the kind of fare people of moral discernment want to have to swallow on a regular basis. So a century after Verdi's death, one is grateful to find him still the cornerstone of the operatic repertoire. He represents the best of a particular art at the moment at which it was at the summit of its achievement. There will not be another like him. ♦

Our Essays, Our Selves

Can American prose move beyond self-absorption? BY SUSAN BALÉE

To read *The Best American Essays 2001*, the new collection of two dozen essays edited by Kathleen Norris and Robert Atwan, is to realize two things. The first is that writers in America today possess a literary instrument of enormous power. The second is that those writers have almost nothing to use it on except themselves. What is perhaps the most extraordinary, turbo-charged general prose that the English language has ever known is harnessed to the largest narcissistic examination of selves—and what, in the absence of any larger topic for the beautiful prose, prove to be often little and uninteresting selves.

The Best American Essays 2001
edited by Kathleen Norris
and Robert Atwan
Houghton Mifflin, 400 pp., $13

The writers assembled in *The Best American Essays* reflect upon all manner of things, from food to death to prayer to language to their relationships with parents and children. The writing glitters, but the vein of self-absorption runs deep.

Diane Ackerman's "In the Memory Mines," the first essay in the collection, opens: "I don't remember being born, but opening my eyes for the first time, yes." Ackerman's ability to map

Susan Balée's essay on the life and work of Percy B. Shelley will appear in this year's edition of Scribner's British Writers *series, edited by Jay Parini.*

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her own infant universe is fascinating, in a peculiar way, but it's hard to imagine anything more self-absorbed—except perhaps what she goes on to describe: the bad father who locked away forever her inner child in a row house closet around 1955.

> He only ever seemed to read the paper or watch television or sleep or yell at my mother or slam the door to their bedroom, after which I would sometimes hear my mother crying. For some reason he never had time for me. In my heart, I knew it must somehow be my fault, that I must be somehow unworthy of his love, his attention even, the way the newspaper or television at least had his attention.

To give Ackerman credit, she knows she needs to be part of a community larger than herself. She just can't find one. The closest she can get is by reaching out to her unhappy inner children. "I felt I had adopted a child on the installment plan, a child that was myself, and it felt good suddenly to be part of a community, even if it was only a community of previous selves."

To some degree, of course, it has always been thus. Reflecting on what the personal essay is all about, Kathleen Norris claims in her introduction that personal essayists have no other goal than to muse aloud, "to explore an idea or situation through the act of writing." Personal essayists talk primarily to themselves, thereby also chatting with someone they will never know, the reader—for whom the act of reading is thus reduced to a mild form of eavesdropping.

As Atwan puts it, "The mysterious *I* converses with an equally mysterious *I*." Ackerman, perhaps without knowing it, summons to consciousness the "community of one" that Thoreau embraced at Walden. The personal essay, a subset of autobiography, has flourished in America in part because Americans have always been encouraged to stand out as sovereign individuals within the nation's collective identity.

That "I" voice can sink to trivial self-absorption, as it too often has in recent years. But, at its best, this American song of the self can prove a highly moral project: the willingness to take responsibility for thoughts and feelings expressed in its name, to sign a specific signature to a specific opinion.

So, for instance, Ben Birnbaum in his essay in *The Best American Essays 2001* at least attempts to look outside himself for answers. Following Cynthia Ozick's lead, Birnbaum is fascinated by the life and death of the pre-Christian Rabbi Akiva. Roman soldiers flayed the flesh from Akiva's body with metal combs, but he refused to cry out. His final words to his students were that he had finally found a way to dedicate his life and soul to God. This defines, literally, *self*-sacrifice. In Akiva's case, he sacrificed himself for God, but as Birnbaum points out, whenever we give up our devotion to self, we join the larger community. Birnbaum describes his own family's history of death and victimization during the Holocaust, but he refuses to cave in to either self-pity or cultural hatred. Similarly, Barbara Hurd, who's logged a lot of miles in her galoshes slogging through American swamps, aims at an ecological description that makes as much use of ancient Buddhists as Birnbaum did of ancient rabbis.

Can American prose be about anything other than the self? Is this perfected tool useful in a time grown serious again?

Then Daphne Merkin weighs in, with her essay "Trouble in the Tribe," which begins, "I've been trying to lose my religion for years now, but it refuses to go away." Reynolds Price's entire essay is a letter to his godchild about the necessity of faith. He tells her:

> I believe that God remains conscious of his creation and interested in it....Whether he's attentive to every moment of every human's life, as some religions claim, I'm by no means sure. But I do believe that he has standards of action that he means us to observe. I believe that he has communicated those standards—and most of whatever else we know about his transcendent nature—through a few human messengers and through the mute spectacles of nature in all its manifestations, around and inside us (the human kidney is as impressive a masterwork as the Grand Canyon).

Many of these essays treat death and grieving. Charles Bowden meditates on the appetite for life, which he associates with an appetite for food. His essay, "In the Bone Garden of Desire," examines his reaction to the deaths of three friends in six months. He fertilizes his garden with the cremated bones of one and learns to cook and eat with an avidity he had never known before. "Money does not replace the lust for food. Or the flesh. Nothing replaces it, nothing. Sometimes it dies, this appetite, sometimes it just vanishes in people. But it is never replaced." In "The Work of Mourning," Francine du Plessix Gray thinks of the death of her parents, as Jeffrey Heiman in "La Forge" examines the loss of his father.

All of these are beautifully done. And yet, what stands out now—in our world, changed on September 11—is, finally, their triviality. These are the creations of a time when nothing much seemed to matter and, consequently, the self came to dominate the writerly imagination. Over the last decades, American writers enjoyed the luxury of time and money for education, travel, and experience unrivaled in the history of Western civilization. And they used all that to hone a first-person prose of real power and subtlety.

The question is whether that prose can finally express anything *other than* the self. The fundamental problem of fine writing in our day is whether we can use this perfected tool to express what must be expressed in a time suddenly grown serious again—or

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whether we must start over, abandoning the style on which we've expended so much effort.

I am not unhopeful. This all-American prose has, I believe, enough suppleness to survive, and the 2003 issue of *The Best American Essays* may reveal the existing style wedded to a new purpose in which individual concerns have given way to larger, communal ones. "Our own will be a memorable age in intellectual achievements," Percy Bysshe Shelley wrote at the beginning of the nineteenth century, for "we live among such philosophers and poets as surpass beyond comparison any who have appeared since the last national struggle for civil and religious liberty." That was in a volume called *A Defense of Poetry*. If the present-day wielders of the essay manage, in the wake of the attacks of September 11, to aim their gorgeous writing style at the high moral topics now forced upon us, then we may be able to echo Shelley in our time—in defense of prose. ♦

Semite and Anti-Semite

Hatred of Jews in the Arab world.

BY CARLIN ROMANO

As the moral stench of mass murder by Islamic terrorists lingers, so does a blunt question: *Why*?

In his classic memoir, *Survival in Auschwitz*, Primo Levi recounts a moment now famous in Holocaust literature. When he asked why a concentration-camp guard had cruelly knocked an icicle out of his hand that Levi, desperately thirsty, had managed to snatch through an open window, the guard replied, *Hier ist kein warum*: Here there is no why.

Peace: The Arabian Caricature
A Study of Anti-Semitic Imagery
by Arieh Stav
Gefen, 288 pp., $30

We're not quite left in that lurch when it comes to the events of September 11. In *Peace: The Arabian Caricature*, Arieh Stav, director of the Ariel Center for Policy Research in Israel, suggests one key factor: Islamic radicalism's implacable hatred of Jews.

Arab anti-Semitism usually receives little notice from European and American media, primarily because it undermines shibboleths that support behind much shaky foreign policy and public opinion. One is that Arabs don't hate Jews so much as they oppose Zionism or Israel. Another is that only fringe parts of the Arab world endorse anti-Semitism. A third is that all the Arab world really wants is for Israel to adjust its borders. A fourth—perhaps the most sensitive of all—is that Islam and the Koran require Muslims to be protective toward Jews and other non-Muslims.

Arieh Stav tells a different story, powerfully illustrated by scores of racist, anti-Semitic Arabic cartoons, and not just from pariahs like Iraq and Syria, but from our allies Egypt, Jordan, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and even Kuwait. They illustrate the observations by the great scholar of the Middle East, Bernard Lewis, that the Arab world has been, "since 1945, the only place in the world where hard-core, Nazi-style anti-Semitism is publicly and officially endorsed and propagated."

Stav begins by asking, "Has the peace process really dampened Arab hostility?" And his answer is no—it may actually have *heightened* Arab hatred of Jews. That, he maintains, "is reflected in the mirror of Arab caricature, which is a direct, authentic, and hugely influential expression of views in the Arab world, where nearly half the population is illiterate."

If that sounds overly aggressive, prepare for more. Stav specializes in unpleasant facts ignored in today's Middle Eastern policy debates, such as that "Jordan comprises two-thirds of the area earmarked for the Jewish National Home by the League of Nations." Jordan's late King Hussein and his son, King Abdullah, have been terribly reasonable over the years by Middle Eastern standards. So the issue of whether there *already is* a Palestinian state—called Jordan, and handed by Western powers to a "royal family" rather than Palestinian Arabs—gets muted.

Most of the early part of Stav's book chronicles the history of anti-Semitic caricature from the Middle Ages on. But it's after he analyzes Hitler's principles—such as that "Jews were like tubercular bacterium"—that Stav makes a segue few American writers would dare: to kindred animosity expressed in Islam. As Stav explains, drawing on such experts as the great Arab scholar Majid Khadduri, Islam divides the world between *Dar al-Islam* (House of Islam) and *Dar al-Harb* (House of War). Jihad, according to Khadduri, "may be regarded as Islam's instrument for carrying out its ultimate objective by turning all people into believers."

By that view, Islam obliges Muslims to bring all lands into the *Dar al-Islam*, which makes enemies of all countries not under Islamic sovereignty. The favored model of how non-Muslims should live under Islamic sovereignty, Stav writes, is as *dhimmi*—supposedly "protected minorities" under Islamic "tutelage," but historically there have been subservient minorities.

Israel particularly sticks in the craw of Islamicists, Stav writes, because even though it exercises sovereignty over only one-five-hundredth of the territory of modern *Dar al-Islam*, it's geographically smack in the middle, frustrating a Greater Islam. So, he observes, when Arabs castigate Israel as "a cancer in the body of the Arab

Carlin Romano, literary critic of the Philadelphia Inquirer, *teaches philosophy at Temple University.*

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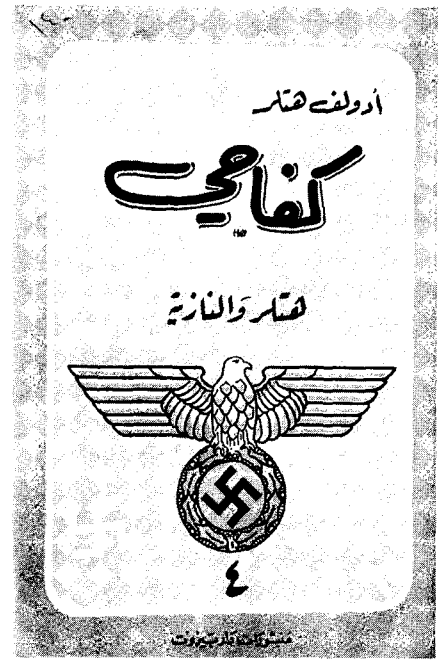

Both photos: CORBIS.

Left: An Arabic copy of Mein Kampf. *Right: A member of Hamas lectures a crowd of Arabs.*

nation," or "a dagger in the heart of the Arab"—rhetorical overkill to Westerners—they're making perfect sense within Islamic ideology, which calls for "Islamic hegemony over the world."

Over pages and pages, *Peace: The Arabian Caricature* displays recent Arab caricatures of Jews as snakes, insects, and drinkers of blood, and quotes such governmental organizations as the Academy for the Study of Islam at Al-Azhar University in Cairo the "highest center of learning in Islam," which described Jews as "dogs of humanity.... Their wicked nature never changes.... They slay women, children, and rip up pregnant women."

Stav's book isn't fair—it neglects more humane interpreters of Islam who, like Judeo-Christian scholars embarrassed by the Old Testament's savage God, emphasize jihad as "psychological struggle with oneself," or Koranic verses that stress peace rather than conquest.

Still, it provides useful counterevidence to the Bush administration and American media's desire to draw bright lines between Islamic terror and our "allies" in the Middle East, and to depict Islam as a uniformly kindly religion that prohibits killing innocents, loves little children, and so on. You can bet we won't be hearing much in coming days about how the Hadith, the collection of tales about the Prophet and his companions, says, "The Day of the Resurrection shall not come, unless you go to war against the Jews. And the rock shall say, 'Oh, Muslim, a Jew is hiding behind me. Come kill him.'" Until recently, Stav asserts, Arabic didn't even possess a word for secular people, referring to non-Muslims as "infidels."

As if his bravery in adducing such facts weren't enough, Stav also reports on a topic familiar to Israelis and Arabs, but virtually undiscussed in the United States: the historical and ideological connections between Islamic anti-Semitism and Nazism. No less than the former mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin al-Husseini, stated that there was "a definite similarity between the principles of Islam and the principles of Nazism."

Where is the Arab Emile Zola? Where is the man of conscience who will challenge the shabby hatred of his peers?

But Stav drives home the parallelism by offering hard evidence of the appreciation for Nazism often found throughout the Arab world, and comparing Islamic jihad with Hitler's concept of *kampf* (Hitler declared that "War is the foundation of existence," and the Hadith states that "Jihad is the pinnacle of faith"). Just as the German historian Heinrich von Treitschke coined the slogan, "The Jews are our catastrophe" (which became a Nazi battle cry), so Palestinian Arabs call their loss of land to Palestinian Jews in 1948 the *nakba*, or catastrophe. Stav's chapter on Arab celebration of Nazism teems with ugly facts unknown in America, such as Anwar Sadat's letter of praise for Hitler.

"Where is the Arab Emile Zola?" Stav asks. Where, in other words, is the man of conscience who, like that courageous French writer, will challenge the shabby hatred of his peers? The answer is—dead, in some cases, at the hands of extremists. Rather than flatter Islam in the difficult months ahead, writers, thinkers, and officials should acknowledge that it is capable, like Christianity and Judaism, of being used for either good or evil, and that too many of its adherents have veered into fanatical hatred. Calling Islamic terrorists "fundamentalists" avoids the crucial decision Islam faces: whether hate or love will be fundamental to Muslim life. ♦

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The Standard Reader

"Sir, the humor section's off limits until further notice."

The Sontag Award

This week's winner is the *London Review of Books*, which asked its regular writers for commentary on the terrorist attack against the United States. The result is an extraordinary tissue of political hatred, intellectual vulgarity, and moral incapacity. The entire issue belongs in a museum, under glass, as the definitive display of ideology's triumph over thought and the archetypal example of thinkers unable to think in any new way, even with the horror in front of them of 6,000 dead.

So, Mary Beard writes, "However tactfully you dress it up, the United States had it coming." Terry Eagleton adds, "There is no conscious hypocrisy in believing yourself the great bastion of freedom while . . . embargoing Iraqi children to death and being in effect a one-party state." Fredric Jameson, Michael Rogin, Richard Rorty, Edward Said, Michael Wood—one thinker after another in a parade of thoughtlessness.

But three of the commentaries are particularly astonishing, if only for their source. What could possess Thomas Laqueur to assert that "On the scale of evil the New York bombings are sadly not so extraordinary and our Government has been responsible for many that are probably worse"?

The Yale literary critic David Bromwich used to be a subtle reader of poetry, but now he writes with incredible intellectual vulgarity that patriotism and religious belief are to blame for the recent attacks: "Terrorism, religious orthodoxy, and nationalism of all kinds (insurgent as well as established) have become in our time inseparable companions: those who apologize for one thereby take on their conscience the crimes of the rest."

Finally, there is Eric Foner, the Columbia historian, who has placed himself beyond the pale with a commentary that begins: "I'm not sure which is more frightening: the horror that engulfed New York City or the apocalyptic rhetoric emanating daily from the White House."

Perhaps the *London Review of Books* has done us a favor, for we will never have to take any of these writers seriously again. ♦

Books in Brief

***Rethinking Democratic Accountability* by Robert D. Behn (Brookings, 192 pp., $41.95)** What would it mean to hold public officials democratically accountable? According to the view that long held sway, accountability consists in assuring that officials keep their books in order and comply with proper procedures.

Robert Behn argues this paradigm is seriously deficient. By dwelling on finances and procedural fairness, it created an "ethics police" which stifled creativity, discouraged discretion, and obscured questions about performance. Moreover, this notion of accountability rests on an unconvincing distinction between policy-making and administration, as though administrators did not need to make policy judgments to implement programs devised by elected representatives.

With an agreeable mixture of good humor, common sense, and scholarship, Behn espouses a "new public-administration paradigm" that he contends is more flexible and fair, balancing concerns about ethics with efficiency and effectiveness. Drawing on recent work in game theory, the logic of collective action, and the evolution of cooperation, Behn argues that respect for rules can be promoted and performance enhanced by employing "compacts of mutual collective responsibility." These compacts, voluntarily entered into by public officials, harness self-interest and work to make public officials more accountable to the people by making them more accountable to one another.

Whether democratic accountability is the only accountability with which democracies need concern themselves, and what role a sense of honor, a commitment to excellence, and a love of justice play in holding one's fellow citizens and oneself accountable, are questions that go beyond the scope of Behn's analysis—as it goes beyond much of the political science scholarship on which Behn relies.

—Peter Berkowitz

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From a Reuters wire story, Friday, October 12

Not a Parody

Bush's "most wanted" move risks alienating Muslims

By Karen Matusic

LONDON (Reuters) - The United States has put a face on terrorism—and that face is Arab: just the sort of action analysts fear will pit the West against Islam.

They say the new U.S. "most wanted" list is more dramatic than diplomatic and risks inciting racial hatred, for all the West's insistence that it is fighting terrorism and not Islam.

"The irony is that by personalising and demonising you alienate. Despite all the attempts to show that its battle is not against Islam, (U.S. President George W.) Bush is making it all about Islam," said George Joffe, a Middle East expert at Cambridge University.

"All the indicators, the simplifiers—the head dress, the beards, the appearance—all indicate a particular group, associated with a particular culture. All this goes against the attempts by the U.S. administration to de-demonise Islam."

Bush's list, unveiled on Wednesday, smacked of the same kind of "Wild West" imagery as his vow to capture "Dead or Alive" the Saudi-born Osama bin Laden, prime suspect in the September 11 attacks on U.S. landmarks that killed more than 5,500. . . .

Since so many of those appearing on Wednesday's "most wanted terrorists" posters—which offer a $5 million reward—were Arab in appearance and all had Muslim names, many Arabs and Muslims fear they will now become targets of racial attacks. . . .

Analysts say anti-U.S. sentiment could harden following the release of the posters and the continuing military strikes on Muslim Afghanistan for harbouring bin Laden.

Surely white Christians could make a U.S. most-wanted list?

"Why pick on Arabs? Are there no South Americans, Irish, Serbs, Japanese among the most wanted? This will increase the bitterness people here feel against the West," Hussein Amin, a writer on Islamic affairs and former Egyptian ambassador to Algeria, told Reuters.

the weekly Standard
October 22, 2001

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A Different Kind of Character for a Different Kind of War

David Davenport is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

Wasn't it only yesterday that we ushered in the new millennium with such loud fanfare and high hopes? But, in only a matter of months, we are already engaged in the first war of the new era, one described as a "different kind of war" against secret enemies in unknown places. Doubtless there can be no high-tech knockout punch, as in the gulf war; instead we will need to gird ourselves for sustained combat against terrorism around the world.

Thanks to authors and actors such as Tom Brokaw and Tom Hanks, we have rediscovered the key to victory in the greatest war of the last century: the remarkable character of that generation of Americans. I know it firsthand because I grew up in one of its families. Character traits such as sacrifice, loyalty, teamwork, and deferred gratification came naturally to my parents after their World War II experience.

What kind of character might it take to win this new kind of war? And does this generation have what it takes? The early signs are encouraging. Who could not have been inspired by the character of firefighters in New York or the heroism of passengers on United Flight 93? Happily this year's fall colors include the red, white, and blue of patriotism, everywhere from storefronts to pickup trucks.

But to win this war, **an initial outburst of heroism and patriotism will not be enough.** When the book is written on this generation of Americans and its major war against terrorism, it will need to record that Americans reframed their character in several important ways.

This is truly the "now" generation. Through technology, basically everything we know can be zipped around the world in a matter of moments, and billions of dollars change hands in a nanosecond. Americans will want pictures of captured terrorists and shorter lines at airports very soon.

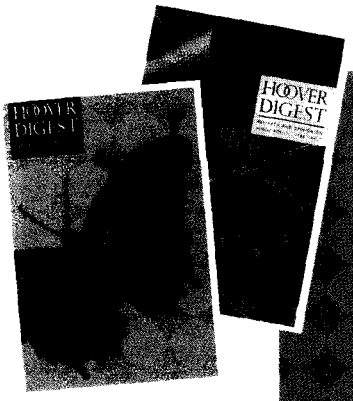
But can we reframe our thinking and recognize that a complex war such as this is not fought in minutes or hours but perhaps in months and years? If the opportunity before us is to rally the world community and eradicate the threat of terrorism, that will be a long-term economic, political, and military campaign. **Can we reframe our frustration and understand that patience is part of our contribution to winning this war?**

We are also the "me" generation, focused mainly on meeting our own needs. In the early days of this battle, there have been encouraging signs that we were breaking through to the "we" thinking that could win this war. Political leaders set aside their conflicts and stood together; ordinary Americans set aside their own personal safety and comfort to help others. We must remember that World War II was not won by soldiers alone but also by people back home who saved gasoline and built ships faster than ever before.

In short, this "different kind of war" is as likely to be decided by the content of our character as by the accuracy of our bombs. Let's be sure America is well armed!

— David Davenport

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



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HELPING END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

He said he beat me because I deserved it.

Now I know I deserve better.

"He tried to strangle me last night."

Melissa cried as she wrote these words, eight months pregnant and seeking an order of protection from her husband. Their high school romance had seemed like a fairy tale, but when the honeymoon ended, the beatings began. Terrified, she hid her abuse from family and friends. Once she was finally free from her abusive husband, Melissa began to share her story with other young women, so they would know that no one should live with domestic violence.

Too often, society blames victims of domestic violence for not leaving, rather than holding the abusers responsible. The reality is that fear, financial dependency and concern for the children can make the idea of leaving seem impossible. No one deserves to be abused. And everyone should have someone to turn to. With your support, domestic violence programs across America can offer hope and new beginnings. Just ask Melissa.

Recently, we have all seen the devastating effects of violence on our country, and the power of communities that unite to help those in need. If domestic violence is affecting you or someone you know, or if you'd like to make a contribution, contact:

National Domestic Violence Hotline
(800) 799-SAFE ext. 26
(800) 787-3224 (TTY)
www.ndvh.org

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